PIPES of PAN

DEFINITIVE EDITION

BLISS CARMAN



CONTAINING

FROM THE BOOK OF MYTHS.
FROM THE GREEN BOOK OF THE BARDS, SONGS OF THE SEA CHILDREN, SONGS FROM A NORTHERN GARDEN, FROM THE BOOK OF VALENTINES.

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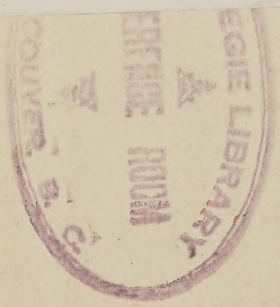
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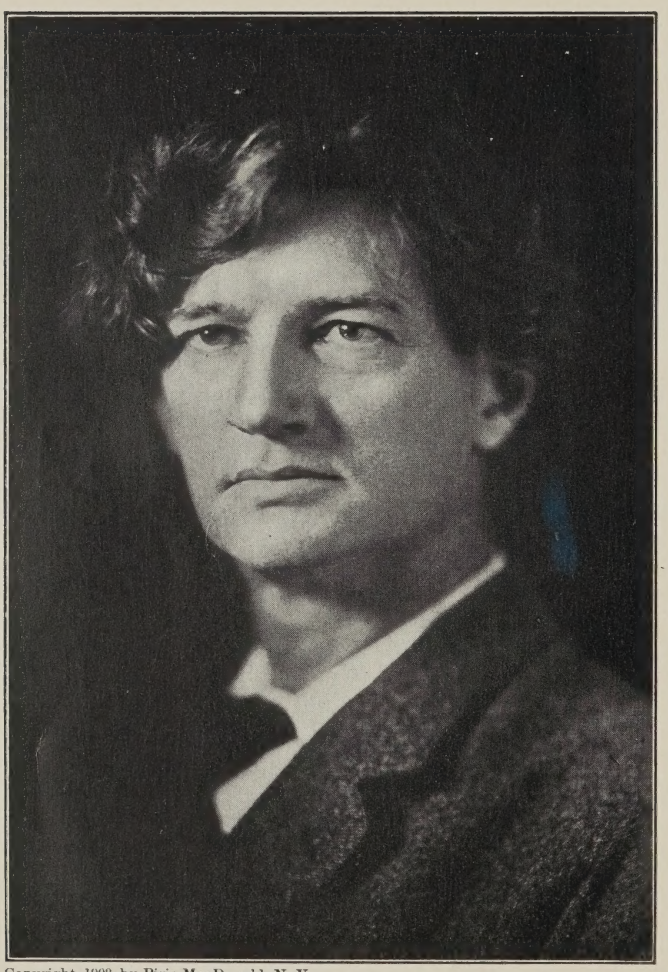
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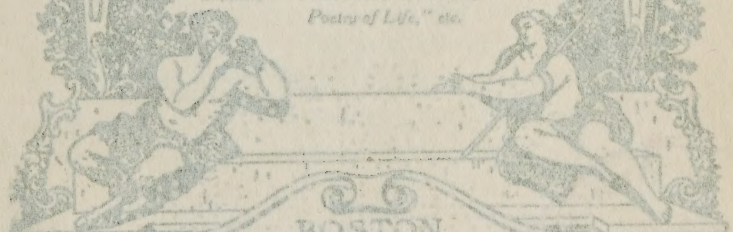
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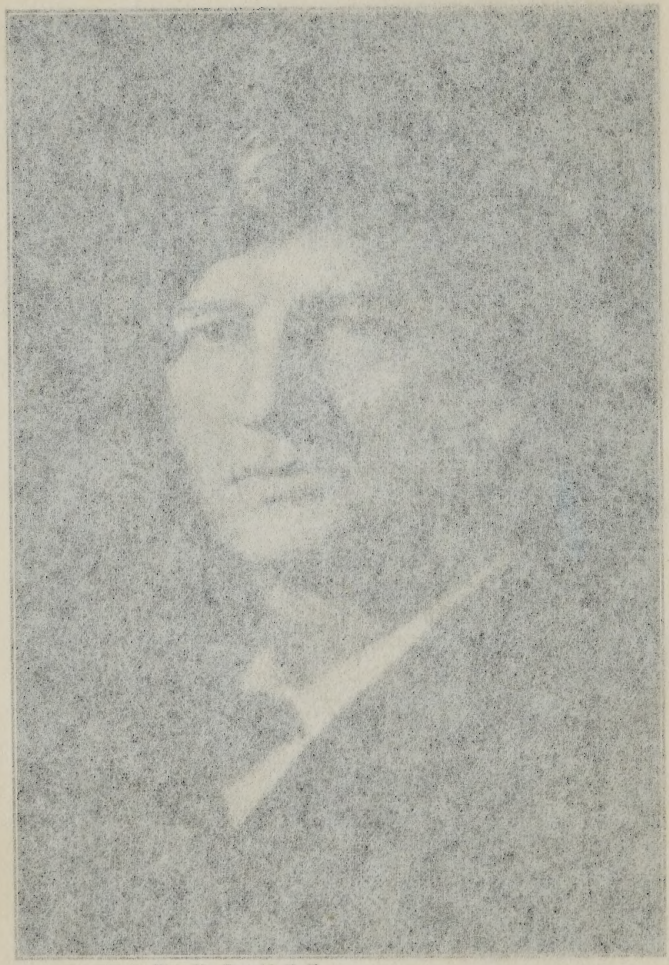
BLISS CARMAN

Author of

"Sappho," "The Kinship of Nature," "The Poetry of Life," etc.

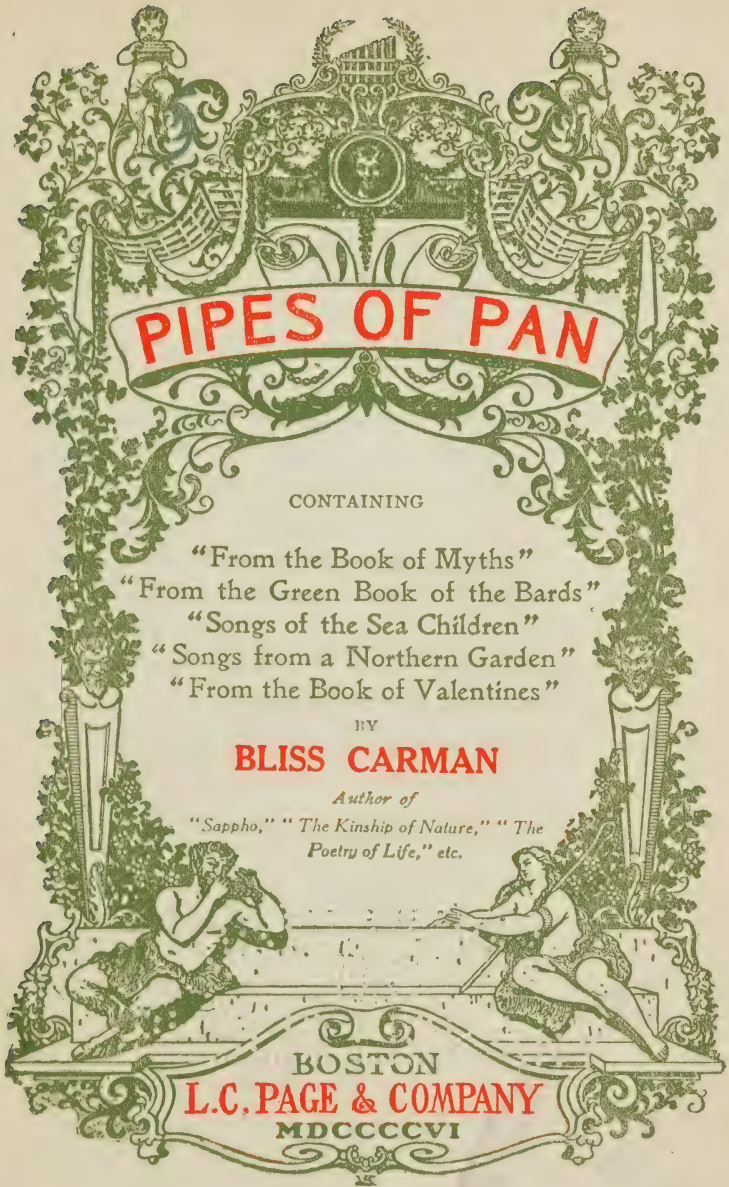


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PIPES OF PAN

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"From the Book of Myths"
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BLISS CARMAN

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PREFACE

It is a hearty old saying that "Good wine needs no bush." Why, then, should the master of a road-house hang out a sign, letting folk know there is good drink within?

Consider the feelings of the landlord, poor man. At once nettled and abashed, he exclaims:

"Pray why should I stick a bough over my door? My tavern is well bespoke for miles about, and all the folk know I serve nothing but good, honest liquor, — and mighty comforting it is of a cold night, when the fire is bright on the hearth, or refreshing on a hot day either."

"Nay, but," says the stranger, "how should a traveller know of this? You must advertise, man. Hang out your sign to attract the passer-by, and increase trade. Trade's the thing. You should be doing a driving business, with a cellar like yours."

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"Huh," replies the taverner, "I perceive that in the city where you come from it may not be a mark of character in a man to rely wholly upon merit, but that if one would ensure success, he must sound a trumpet before him, as the hypocrites do, that they may have glory of men, as the Word says."

"Tut, man," says the stranger, "look at your friend John Doe under the hill yonder. Does a wonderful business. Famous all over the country for his home-brewed ale, and his pockets lined with gold."

"Yes," says the host, "John Doe is a good thrifty man and as fine a comrade as you'd wish to find, selling his hundred thousand bottles a year. But the gist of the matter between us isn't all in quantity, I'll be bound. Quality is something. And as for myself I would as soon have a bottle of wine as a keg of beer any day. Wine is the poetry of life, in a manner of speaking, and ale you see is the prose, — very good to get along on, but no sorcery in it. Three things, I always say, a man needs have, — meat for his belly, a fire for his shins, and generous wine to keep him in countenance with himself. And

that's no such easy matter in a difficult world, I can tell you. 'Tis wine that gives a man courage and romance, and puts heart in him for deeds and adventures and all manner of plain wholesome love. And that, after all, is the mainspring with most men, hide it how they may. For what ever was done, that was worth doing, and was not done for a woman or for the sake of a friend, I should like to know?"

"Maybe I hadn't thought of that," says the stranger. "You must have tasted some rare wine in your time."

"Not so much," says the other, "but I was born with a shrewd taste for it, you may say. Moreover I came of a people who were far farers in their day, and have been abroad myself more than once. So it comes you find the foreign vintages in my bins. There's some Greek wine I have, sir, that's more than a century old, I'll wager; and a rare Moon-wine, as they call it, picked up in an out-of-the-way port, that will make you forget your sorrow like a strain of music; light wines from France, too; and some Heather Brose, very old and magical, such as the little dark people used to make hereabout in the times

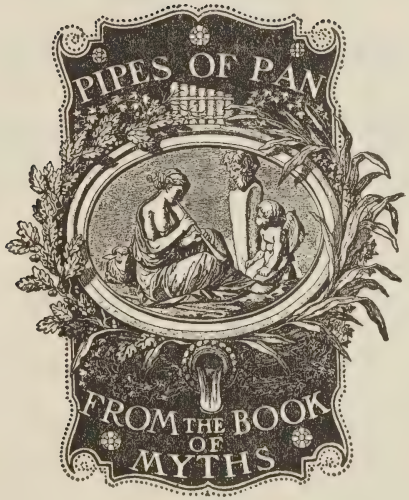
of the Celts long ago, — and very good times they were too. It is not these days that have all the wisdom ever was, you may be sure."

"You are not such a bad advocate, after all," remarks the stranger. "You speak very invitingly."

"Step inside," says the landlord.

Bliss Carman.

October 10, 1902.


PIPES OF PAN
FROM THE BOOK OF MYTHS

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To C. G. D. R.

"For my heart had a touch of the woodland time."

The Ghost House,
Twilight Park in the Catskills,
August, 1902.

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OVERLORD.

πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ᾽ ἐμέ.

Lord of the grass and hill,
Lord of the rain,
White Overlord of will,
Master of pain,

I who am dust and air
Blown through the halls of death,
Like a pale ghost of prayer,—
I am thy breath.

Lord of the blade and leaf,
Lord of the bloom,
Sheer Overlord of grief,
Master of doom,

Lonely as wind or snow,
Through the vague world and dim,
Vagrant and glad I go;
I am thy whim.

Lord of the storm and lull,
Lord of the sea,
I am thy broken gull,
Blown far alee.

Lord of the harvest dew,
Lord of the dawn,
Star of the paling blue
Darkling and gone,

Lost on the mountain height
Where the first winds are stirred,
Out of the wells of night
I am thy word.

Lord of the haunted hush,
Where raptures throng,
I am thy hermit thrush,
Ending no song.

Lord of the frost and cold,
Lord of the North,
When the red sun grows old
And day goes forth,

I shall put off this girth,—
Go glad and free,
Earth to my mother earth,
Spirit to thee.

THE PIPES OF PAN.

This is something that I heard,—
Half a cry and half a word,—
On a magic day in June,
In the ghostly azure noon,
Where the wind among the trees
Made mysterious melodies,
Such as those which filled the earth
When the elder gods had birth.

Ah, the world is growing old!
Of the joys it used to hold,
Love and beauty, naught have I
But the fragrant memory.

Once, ah, once, (ye know the story!)
When the earth was in her glory,

Ere man gave his heart to breed
Iron hate and heartless greed,
Near a meadow by a stream
Quiet as an ageless dream,
As I watched from the green rim
Of a beech grove cool and dim,
Musing in the pleasant shade
The soft leafy sunlight made,
What should gleam and move and quiver
Down by the clear, pebbly river,
Where the tallest reeds were growing
And the bluest iris blowing,—
Gleam a moment and then pass,
(Ah, the dare-to-love she was,
In her summer-fervid dress
Of sheer love and loveliness!)
Wayward, melting, shy, and fond,
Lissome as a bulrush wand,
Fresh as meadowsweet new-blown,
Sandal lost, and loosened zone,

Our own white Arcadian
Touched with rose and creamy tan,
Eyes the colour that might fleck
The red meadow lily's neck,
Hair with the soft silky curl
Of some strayed patrician girl,
Beech-brown on the sunlit throat,
Cheek of tawny apricot,
Parted lips and breast aglow,—
Who but Syrinx, as ye know!

Gone, swift as a darting swallow,
What could young Pan do but follow?
(Have ye felt the warm blood leap,
When the soul awakes from sleep,
At a glance from some dark eye
Of a sudden passing by?—
Known the pulse's hurried throb
And the breathing's catch and sob,
When, upon his race with Death,

Life the runner halts for breath,
Taking with a happy cry
His brief draught of ecstasy?)
Call I did, with only laughter
Blown back, as I hurried after;
Till I reached the riverside,
Where I last had seen her glide
In among the reeds, and there
Lost her. But a breath of air
Moved the grass-heads, going by,
And I heard the rushes sigh.

So the chase has always proved;
And Pan never yet has loved,
But the loved one all too soon
Merged in music and was gone,—
Melted like a passing strain,
Vanished like a gust of rain
Or a footfall of the wind,
Leaving not a trace behind.

All that once was Pitys stirs
In the soft voice of the firs.
Lovers, when ye hear that sigh,
Not without a prayer pass by!
And, O lovers, when ye hear,
On a morning soft and clear,
All that once was Echo still
Wandering from hill to hill,
Breathe a prayer lest ye too stray,
Lost upon the mountain way,
And go seeking all your lives
Love, when but his ghost survives!

Then a swaying river reed
From the water, for my need,
In a dream I blindly drew,
Cut and fashioned, ranged and blew,—
Such a music as was played
Never yet since earth was made.
Shrilling, wild and dazed and thin,

All my welling heart therein
Trembled, till the piping grew
Pure as fire and fine as dew,
Till confusion was untangled
From the crowding notes that jangled,
And a new-created world
To my wonder was unfurled,
Sphere by sphere, as climbing sense
Faltered at the imminence
Of the fragile thing called soul
Just beyond oblivion's goal,
And creation's open door
Bade me enter and explore.

Slowly hill and stream and wood
Merged and melted, for my mood,
With the colour of the sun
In the pipe I played upon.

Slowly anger from me fell,
In the coil of that new spell
My own music laid on me,—
Like the great rote of the sea,
Like the whisper of the stream,
Like a wood bird's sudden gleam,
Or the gusts that swoop and pass
Through the ripe and seeding grass,—
Perfect rhythm and colour cast
In the perfect mould at last.

Slowly I came back to poise,—
A new self with other joys,
Other raptures than before,
Harming less and helping more.
I could strive no more for gain;
Being was my true domain,
And the smiling peace that ever
In the end outruns endeavour.
It was not enough to do;

I must feel, but reason too,—
Find the perfect form and fashion
For the elemental passion;
Else must blemish still be hurled
On the beauty of the world,—
Gloom and clang and hate alloy
Colour, melody, and joy,
And the violence of error
Fill the earth with sound and terror.

So I felt the subtle change,
Large, enduring, keen, and strange;
And on that day long ago
I became the god ye know,
Made by music out of man.
Now ye have the pipes of Pan,
Which ye call by Syrinx' name,
Keeping bright a little fame
Few folk ever think upon.
Ah, but where is Syrinx gone?

As the mountain twilight stole
Through the woods from bole to bole,
A dumb warder setting free
Every shy divinity,
I became aware of each
Presence, aspen, bass, and beech;
And they all found voice and made
A green music in the shade.

Therefore, therefore, mortal man,
When ye hear the pipes of Pan,
Marvel not that they should hold
Something sad and calm and old,
Like an eerie minor strain
Running through the strong refrain.
All there is of human woe
Pan has fathomed long ago;
All of sorrow, all of ill,
Kindly Pan remembers still;
Disappointment, grief, disdain,

Stifled impulse and bleak pain,—
Pan has learned them; Pan has known
Hurts and passions of his own.

Thus Pan knows the secret hid
Under the Great Pyramid;
Why young lovers for their love
Think the stars are light enough,
And they very well may house
In the odorous fir boughs,—
Think there is no light of day
With the loved one gone away,
Use in life, nor pleasure more
By the hearth or out of door,—
Since all things begin and end
But to glad the little friend,
And all gladness is forgot
Where the little friend is not.

Thus Pan melts your human heart
With the magic of his art.
Yet, O heart-distracted man,
When you hear the pipes of Pan,
Marvel not that they should hold
Something sure and strong and bold,
Like a dominant refrain
Heartening the minor strain.

Come into the woods once more;
Leave the fire and close the door;
Trust the spirit that has made
Musical the light and shade,
Still to guard you, still to guide you,
Somewhere in the wood beside you,
Pace for pace upon the road
To your larger next abode.
Though the world should lay a finger
On your arm to bid you linger,
Ye shall neither halt nor tarry

(Little be the load ye carry!)
When ye hear the pipes of Pan
Shrill and pleading in the van.
'Tis the music that has freed you
From the old life, and shall lead you,
Gently wise and strongly fond,
To the greater life beyond.
Yet I whisper to you, "Stay;
That new life is here; to-day
Is your home, whose roof shall rise
From the ground before your eyes."

For Pan loves you and is near,
Though no music you should hear.
Hearken, hearken; it will grow,
Spite of bitterness and woe,
Clear and sweet and undistraught,
(This old earth's impassioned thought,)
And the sorry heart shall learn
What no rapture could discern.

All the music ye have heard:
Mountain brook and orchard bird;
Fifers in the April swamp,
Fiddlers leading August's pomp;
All the mellow flutes of June
Melting on the mating tune;
Pale tree cricket with his bell
Ringing ceaselessly and well,
Sounding silver to the brass
Of his cousin in the grass;
Hot cicada clacking by,
When the air is dusty dry;
Old man owl, with noiseless flight,
Whoo-hoo-hooing in the night;
Surf of ocean, sough of pine;
Note of warbler, sharp and fine;
Rising wind and falling rain,
Lowing cattle on the plain;
And that hardly noticed sound
When the apples come to ground,

On the long, still afternoons,
In the shelter of the dunes;
Chir and guggle, bark and cry,
Bleat, hum, twitter, coo and sigh,
Mew and belling, hoot and bay,
Clack and chirrup, croak and neigh,
Whoof and cackle, whine and creak,
Honk and chatter, caw and squeak;
Wolf and eagle, mink and moose,
Each for his own joyous use
Uttering the heart's desire
As the season bade aspire;
Folk of meadow, crag, and dale,
Open barren and deep swale,—
Every diverse rhythm and time
Brought to order, ranged in rhyme:
All these bubbling notes once ran
Thrilling through the pipes of Pan.

Think you Pan forgets the tune
Learned beneath the slim new moon,
When these throbbings all were blent
To the dominant intent?

All the beauties ye have seen:
Autumn scarlet, young spring green;
Floating mists that drift and follow
Up the dark blue mountain hollow;
Yellow sunlight, silver spray;
The wild creatures at their play;
Through still hours the floating seed
Of the thistle and milkweed,
And the purple asters snowed
In a drift beside the road;
Swarthy fern by pebbly shoal;
Mossed and mottled beech-tree bole;
Fireflies in a dewy net,
When the summer eves are wet;
All the bright, gay-coloured things

Buoyed in air on balanced wings;
All earth's wonder; then the sea
In his lone immensity
Only the great stars can share,
And the life uncounted there,
Where the coral gardens lie
And the painted droves go by,
In the water-light and gloom,
Silent till the day of doom:
These have lent, as beauty can,
Colour to the pipes of Pan.

Think you Pan forgets the key
Of their primal melody,—
Phrase and motive to revive
Every drooping soul alive?

All the wilding rapture shared
With the loved one, when ye dared
(Lip to lip and knee to knee)

Force the door of destiny,—
Greatly loved and greatly gave,
Too divine to stint or save;
All the passion ye have poured
For the joy of the adored,
Spending without thought or measure
Young delight and priceless treasure,
Grown immortal in the hour
When fresh manhood came in flower;
All the ecstasy unpent
From sweet ardours finding vent
In the coming on of spring,
When the rainy uplands ring,
And the misty woods unfold
To the magic as of old;
All the hot, delicious swoon
Of the teeming summer noon,
When the year is brought to prime
By the bees among the thyme,
And each mortal heart made over

By the wind among the clover:
All these glad things ye shall find
With a free and single mind,
Dreaming eye and cheek of tan,
Lurking in the pipes of Pan.

So the forest wind went by,—
Half a word and half a sigh,—
On a magic night in June,
When the wondrous silent moon
Flooded the blue mountain clove,
And the stream in my beech grove
Uttered secrets strange and deep,
Like one talking in his sleep.

Would ye enter, maid and man,
The novitiate of Pan?
Know the secret of the strain
Lures you through the summer plain,
Guess the meaning of the thrill

Haunts you on the autumn hill?
Would ye too contrive a measure
Out of love, to fill your leisure?
Learn to fashion a flute-reed
That should answer to love's need,
When the spirit in you cries
To be given form and guise
Others may perceive and love,
Fair and much accounted of,—
Craves to be the tenant heart
In some wild, new, lovely art,
Such as haunts the glades of spring
When the woodlands bloom and ring?

While the silver night still broods
On the mountain solitudes,
And the great white planet still
Is undimmed upon the hill,—
Ere a hint of subtile change
Steals across the purple range

To arouse the sleeping bird,—
Hear the wise old master's word,
When he leads the pregnant notes
From the reedy golden throats,
And the traveller, in their spell,
Halts, and wonders what they tell!

Here is Pan's green flower, the earth,
He has tended without dearth,
Brought to blossom, fruit, and seed
By the sap's imperious need,
When the season of the sun
Sets its fervour free to run.
Sap of tree and pith of man,
Ah, but they are dear to Pan!
Not a creature stirs or moves,
But Pan heartens and approves;
Not a being loves or dies,
But Pan knows the sacrifice.
Man or stripling, wife or maid,

Pan is ever by to aid ;
And no harm can come to you,
But his great heart feels it, too.

Love's use let the joiner prove
By the fit of tongue and groove;
Or the smith, whose forge's play
Stubborn metal must obey ;
Let the temple-builders own,
As they mortise stone to stone ;
Or the sailor, when he reeves
Sheet and halliard through the sheaves ;
Or the potter, from whose wheel
Fair and finished shapes upsteal,
As by magic of command,
Guided by the loving hand.

Ye behold in love the tether
Binding the great world together;
For without that coil of wonder

The round world would fall asunder,
And your hearts be filled with sadness
At a great god's seeming madness,
Where they now have peace, and hope,
Somewhere, somehow, time will ope,
And the loneliness be sated,
And the longing be abated
In the loved one, lovely past
All imagining at last,
Melting, fragrant, starry-eyed,
Like a garden in its pride,
Odorous with hint and rapture
Of soft joys no word can capture.

Ah, the sweet Pandean strain!
He who hears it once shall gain
Freedom of the open door,
Willing to go back no more.

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When ye hear the sea pipes thunder,
Bow the loving heart in wonder;
When ye hear the wood pipes play,
Lift the door latch and away;
When ye hear the hill pipes calling,
Where the pure cold brooks are falling,
Follow till your feet have found
The desired forgotten ground,
And ye know, past all unlearning,
By the raptured quench of yearning,
What the breath is to the reed
Whence the magic notes are freed,—
What new life the gods discover
To the loved one and the lover,
When their fabled dreams come true
In the wondrous fair and new.

For the music of the earth,
Helping joy-of-heart to birth,
(Field note, wood note, wild or mellow,

Bidding all things fare and fellow,)
Means that wisdom lurks behind
The enchantment of the mind;
And your longing keen and tense
Still must trust the lead of sense,—
Hint of colour, form, and sound,—
Till it reach the perfect round,
And completed blend its strain
With the haunted pipes again.
Ye must learn the lift and thrill
That elate the wood pipes still;
Feel the ecstasy and shiver
Of the reed notes in the river;
Shudder to the minor trace
In the sea's eternal bass,
And give back the whole heart's treasure
To supreme the music's measure,
Glad that love should sink and sound
All the beauty in earth's bound.

All this loveliness which ran
Searching through the pipes of Pan,—
All this love must merge and blend
With Pan's piping in the end.
All the knowledge ye draw near
At the ripening of the year,
Living one day at a time,
Innocent of fear or crime,
(When the mountain slopes put on
Their brave scarlet in the sun,
When the sea assumes a blue
Such as April never knew,
And the marshes, fields, and skies
Sing with colour as day dies,)
Peaceful, undistracted, free,
In your earth-born piety;
All the love when friend for friend
Dared misfortune to the end,—
Fronted failure, flouted harm,
For the sake of folding arm,—

Bravelier trod the earth, and bolder,
For the touch of hand on shoulder;
All the homely smiles and tears
Ever given childish years;
Every open, generous deed
Lending help to human need;
Every kindliness to age,
Every impulse true and sage,
Lifting concord out of strife,
Bringing beauty into life:
These no feeble faith can ban
Ever from the pipes of Pan.

Think you Pan forgets the scheme
Or the cadence of his theme?
Ah, your wit must still discover
No mere madness of a lover,
Headstrong, whimsical, and blind,
But a prompting sane and kind,
Scope and purpose, hint and plan,

Lurking in the pipes of Pan;
Calling ever, smooth and clear,
Courage to the heeding ear;
Fluting ever, sweet and high,
Wisdom to the passer-by;
Sounding ever, soft and far,
Happiness no grief can mar.

This enchantment Pan bequeaths
Unto every lip that breathes;
Cunning unto every hand
Agile under will's command;
Unto every human heart
The inheritance of art,
Lighted only by a gleam
Of the dear and deathless dream,—
Power out of hurt and stain
To bring beauty back again,
And life's loveliness restore
To a toiling age once more.

Yes, the world is growing old,
But the joys it used to hold,
Love and beauty, only grow
Greater as they come and go,—
Larger, keener, and more splendid,
Seen to be superbly blended,
As the cadenced years go by,
Into chord and melody,
Strong and clear as ever ran
Over the rude pipes of Pan.

So the music passed and died
In the dark green mountain side;
The entranced ravine took on
A new purple, faint and wan;
And I heard across the hush
A far solitary thrush
From the hemlocks deep and still
Fluting day upon the hill.

MARSYAS.

In Celænæ by Meander lived a youth once long ago,
And one passion great and splendid brimmed his heart to overflow,—
Filled the world for him with beauty, sense and colour, joy and glow.

Not ambition and not power, love nor luxury nor fame,
Beckoned him to join their pageant, summoned Marsyas by name,
Bidding unreluctant spirit dare to keep the soaring aim;

But the sorceries of music, note and rapture,
tone and thrill,
Sounding the serene enchantment over meadow,
stream and hill,
Blew for him the undesisting magic call-note,
followed still.

And he followed. Heart of wonder, how the
keen blue smoke upcurled
From the shepherd huts to heaven! How the
dew lay silver-pearled
Where sleek sided cattle wandered through the
morning of the world!

On a stream bank lay the idler dreaming
dreams — for it was Spring —
And he heard the frogs in chorus make the
watery marshes ring;
Heard new comers at their nesting in the vine-
yards pipe and sing;

Heard the river lisp below him; heard the wind
chafe reed on reed;
Every earth-imprisoned creature finding vent
and voice at need.
Ah! if only so could mortal longing and delight
be freed!

Hark! What piercing unknown cry comes steal-
ing o'er the forest ground,
Pouring sense and soul together in an ecstasy
new-found?
Dream's fulfilment brought to pass and life
untethered at a bound!

Then it pauses, and the youth beyond the river-
bend perceives
A divine one in her beauty stand, half-hidden
by the leaves,
Fingering a wondrous wood-pipe, whence the
clear sound joys or grieves.

As he looked, entranced and musing at the
marvel of the strain,
All her loveliness uncinctured with a madness
touched his brain,
And love, like a vernal fever, dyed him with its
scarlet stain.

But Athene, glancing downward in the silver
of the stream,
As she fluted, saw her perfect mouth distorted
by a seam;
Faltered, stopped, and, disconcerted, seemed to
ponder half in dream

For a rueful moment; and then with reluctance
tossed the reed
She had fashioned in a happy leisure mood to
serve her need
Back into the tranquil river, nothing but a river
weed,

All the cunning life that filled it quenched and
spilt and flung away,
To go seaward to oblivion on a wandering
stream. But stay!
The young Phrygian lad has seen it,— marked
the current set his way,—

Stooped and picked it from the water; put the
treasure-trove to lip;
Blown his first breath, faint yet daring; felt the
wild notes crowd and slip
Into melody and meaning from each testing
finger-tip.

Then, ah, then had mortal spirit sweep and
room at last to range
The lost limits of creation and the borderlands
of change,
All earth's loveliness transmuting into some-
thing new and strange;

All of beauty, all of knowledge, all of wonder,
fused and caught
In the rhythmus of the music, weaving out of
sense and thought
And a touch of love the fabric out of which the
world was wrought.

And the joy of each new cadence, as the glad
notes pressed and cried,
Eager for the strain's fulfilment, as they rose
and merged and died
In the music's utmost measure, filled the rose-
grey mountain side,—

Touched the sheep-bells in the meadow, moved
the rushes in the stream,
And suffused the youth with glory as he passed
from theme to theme;
Made him as the gods of morning in the ampler
air of dream.

Ah, what secret, what enchantment so could help the human need,
Save the breath of life that lingered in the hollow of the reed,
Since the careless mouth of beauty blessed it — with so little heed?

There he stood, a youth transfigured in the young world's golden glow.
Made immortal in a moment by the music's melting flow,
Pattern of the artist's glory for the after years to know.

There he stands for us in picture, with the pipe whereon he plays;
The slow, large-eyed cattle wonder, and the flocks forget to graze,
While upon the hill a shepherd turns and listens in amaze.

In the woods the timid creatures, reassured,
approach and peer,
Half aware the charm's allurement they must
follow as they hear
Is the first far-looked-for presage of the banish-
ment of fear.

Silence falls upon the woodland, quiet settles on
the plain;
Earth and air and the blue heaven, without
harm or taint or stain,
Are restored to their old guise of large serenity
again.

Thus the player at his piping in the early mode
and grave
Took from Wisdom the inventress what the
earth in bounty gave,
And therein to round completion put the beating
heart and brave.

So, you artists and musicians, earth awaits perfection still;
Wisdom tarries by the brookside, beauty loiters on the hill,
For the love that shall reveal them with the yet undreamed-of skill.

Love be therefore all your passion, the one ardour that ye spend
To enhance the craft's achievement with significance and trend,
Making faultless the wild strain that else were faulty to the end.

Love must lend the magic cadence — that unearthly dying fall
When the simple sweet earth-music takes us captive past recall,
And the loved one and the lover lose this world, nor care at all.

SYRINX.

Once I saw (O breath of Summer!) in the azure
prime of June,
When the Northland takes her joy and sets her
wintered life in tune,
The soft wind come down the river, where a
heron slept at noon;

Stir the ripening meadow-grasses, lift the lily-
pads, and stray
Through the tall green ranks of rushes bowing
to its ghostly sway;
Then I heard it, like a whisper of the world, take
voice and say:

"Mortal by the wood-wind's murmur and the whisper of the stream,
I, who am the breath of grasses and the soul of Summer's dream,
Once was Syrinx, whom a great god loved and lost and made the theme

"Of his mournful minor music. Nay, I who had worn the guise
Which allured him, yet eluded, vanishing before his eyes,
When his heart held lonely commune, taking counsel to devise

"Some new solace for sad lovers that should give the spirit vent,
Lovelier than speech of mortals where the stricken soul is pent
And the longing gropes for language large enough for beauty's bent;

"When he drew the reeds and ranged them,
rank by rank from low to shrill,
Bound them with the flax together — I was in-
spiration still,
I was heartache crying through them, I was echo
on the hill.

"And forever I am cadence, joyous, welling,
sad or fond,
When the breath of god or mortal, breaking
time's primeval bond,
Blows upon the mouths of wood and all the
mellow throats respond.

"Not a flute, but I have hidden in its haunted
hollow mould;
In the deep Sicilian twilight, when the shepherd
piped to fold,
I have been the eerie calling of the Pan pipes
rude and old;

" From the ivory monaulos, when the soft Egyptian stars
Sentried Cleopatra's gardens, through the open window-bars
I went forth, a splendid torment, o'er the dreaming nenuphars.

" In the silver-mounted laurel played by some Byzantine boy,
I was frenzy, when the throng night after night went mad for joy,
As the dancer Theodora made the Emperor her toy.

" In the boxwood bound with gold I drew my captives down the Nile,
To the love-feasts of Bubastis, lovers by the thousand file,
Willing converts to my love-call, children of the changeless smile.

" Babylonian Mylitta heard me keep the limpid
tune,
When the lovers danced before her at the feast
of the new moon,
Till the rosy flowers of beauty through her sacred
groves were strewn.

" And Sidonian Astarte and the Asian Cypriote
Knew the large unhurried measure of my earth-
sweet pagan rote,
When the dancing youths before them followed
me from note to note.

" Where some lithe Bithynian flute-boy, nude and
golden in the sun,
Set his red mouth to the twin pipes, I was in each
pause and run,
When his manhood took the meaning of the love-
notes one by one.

"And amid the fields of iris by the blue Ionian sea,
I was solemn-hearted sweetness and pure passion soon to be
In the dark-haired little maid who piped her budding melody.

"I was youth and love and rapture, I was madness in their veins,
Calling through the heats of Summer, calling in the soft Spring rains,
From the olive Phrygian hillsides and the deep Bœotian plains.

"I but blew, and mortals followed; I but breathed, and they were glad, —
King and mendicant and sailor, courtesan and shepherd lad;
For there is no creed nor canon laid on music's myriad.

" Not a tribe nor race nor people born in darkest
savagery,
Dwellers in the Afric forest or the islands of the
sea,
But I wooed them from their war-drums — made
them gentle — set them free.

" Silence fell upon the tam-tams throbbing terror
through the night,
And the prayer-gongs ceased to conjure cowering
villages with fright,
When my cool note, clear as morning, called
them to a new delight.

" I, the breath of flute and oboe, golden wood
and silver reed,
Put away their fear, and taught them with my
love-tone to give heed,
When the love grew large within them, to the
lovely spirit's need.

" Henceforth no mere frantic rhythm of beating foot and patting hand,
Nor monotonous marimba could suffice for soul's demand,
When Joy called her wayworn children and Peace wandered through the land.

" Love must build a better music than the strumming tambourine,
To ensphere his worlds of wonder, height and depth and space between,
Pleasure-lands for Soul, the lover, to preëmpt as his demesne.

" So he took the simple reed-note, as a dewdrop clear and round,
Blew it (magic of creation!) to the tenuous profound
Of sheer gladness, light and colour of the universe of sound.

" And there soars the shining structure, tone on
tone as star on star,
Spheres of knowledge and of beauty, where love's
compensations are,
And the plenitudes of spirit move to rhythm
without a jar;

" Every impulse in its orbit swinging to the
utmost range
Of the normal sweep of being, through un-
fathomed gulfs of change,
Poised, unswerved, and never finding aught un-
lovely or unstrange.

" When some dark Peruvian lover set the love-
flute to his lip,
I was the new soft enchantment loosed upon the
dusk, to slip
Through the trees and thrill the loved one from
warm nape to finger-tip;

"Till she could not choose but follow where
my player piped for her;
So I roused the love within her, set the gipsy
pulse astir,
With my wild delicious pleading, strong as in-
cense, fine as myrrh.

"When for love the Winnebago took his court-
ing-flute and played
His wild theme for days together near the lodge-
door of his maid,
I was ritual and rapture of the triumph he
essayed.

"And my brown Malayan lovers pierce the living
gold bamboo,
For the lone melodious accents of the wind to
wander through,
While my haunting spirit tells them many a
secret old and true.

"In the soft Sumatran pan-flute with its seven
notes I plead;
I am help to the Marquesan in his slender scarlet
reed;
From the immemorial East I draw my dark-eyed
gipsy breed.

"Chukma, Dyak, Mahalaka, Papuan and
Ashanti,
Hillmen from the Indian snows, canoemen from
the Carib sea,
Tribesmen from the world's twelve corners, at
my whisper come to me —

"All the garlanded earth-children in their gala
bright array,
Laughing like the leaves, or sighing like the
grass-heads which I sway;
For my lure is swift to lead them, and my solace
strong to stay.

"And the road must melt before them and their
piping fill all lands,
Till a new world at their fluting like a magic
flower expands,
And Soul's unexplored dominion is surrendered to
their hands.

"Did not I, the woodbreath, calling, make thy
mortal pulses ring,
And thy many-seasoned roof-tree with its dusty
rafters sing?
Was not I the long sweet love-throb in the music-
house of Spring?

"Think how all the golden willows and the
maples crimson-keyed,
Kept the rate appointed season, flowering at the
instant need,
When the wood-pipes gave my summons and the
marshy flutes were freed!

" Love be, then, in every heart-beat, when the year
comes round to June,
And life reaches up to rapture, lingering on the
perfect tune,
As this evening in your valley silvered by the
early moon."

Thus I heard the voice of Syrinx, by the dreamy
river shore,
Sift and cease, as one might pass through a large
room and close the door;
And I knew myself a stranger on this lovely earth
no more.

THE MAGIC FLUTE.

Hear, O Syrinx, thou lost dryad! Marsyas, thou
mortal, hear!
If to lovely and free spirits it is granted to draw
near
And revisit the whole earth from some far-off
and twilight sphere,

Like the limpid star of evening hanging o'er the
dark hill brow,
Globed in light to touch this valley where a wor-
shipper I bow,
O give heed, and of your wisdom help a mortal
lover now!

Lend him, novice at your flute-work, learner of
the magic cry,
Something, howsoever faulty, of that cunning
ecstasy, —
The inevitable cadence where the raptures pause
and die, —

You could marshal at your bidding from the
wind-blown river reeds, —
Mark to rhythm and mould to beauty, — plastic
for perfection's needs;
Skill to give the spirit lodgment where the long-
ing fancy leads!

Souls of lovers lost in music! You who were
beloved of Pan,
Piping madness through the meadow where the
silver river ran,
You who, favoured of Athene, found her careless
gift to man, —

O stray hither, and recalling some such earth-
born golden hour,
When the thrushes eased their sorrow, and the
laurel was in flower,
Give this last lost child of nature one least pit-
tance of your power!

So he shall be well accounted love's own minstrel
first and best,
By another shy wild Syrinx when he puts the
gift to test,
For a single day immortal. And the gods make
good the rest!

Hear, sweetheart, the lonely thrushes! Pure and
pleading up the clove,
From the dark moon-haunted hemlocks and the
spacious dim beech grove,
Pierced by love's own silver planet with a path for
us to rove,

Comes the rapture, clear, unsullied, undistracted, undismayed,
Heart of earth that still remembers how her strength and joy were made,
When the breath of life was given and the touch of doom was stayed, —

The great joyance of creation welling through the world once more;
Love in power and pride and passion, crying still at beauty's door;
Soul in contemplation ranging the star-lighted forest floor.

Once . . . O little girl, lift up that dear, wild, tender wood-nymph's face
To your lover's who so loves you, gladdening all this leafy place,
Where as music merged in moonshine sense and spirit interlace!

In the first of time was Hathor, the Egyptian
Ashtoreth,
She who bore the mighty Sun and quickened
nature with her breath,
Rocked the cradle of the Nile and gave men life
and gave them death.

Once to share her mysteries, when earth grew
green with spring, there came
To her temple in Bubastis, needy and unknown
to fame,
A young herdsman golden-haired and tall,
Argalioth by name.

And his undeflowered beauty, fair as lotus, slim as
palm,
With his voice like sweet hill-water sounding in
the choric psalm,
Touched the mighty heart there brooding in
inviolable calm.

And a sigh as of the wind arose; the song was hushed; the veil
Of the Shrine, which none might enter, moved and shimmered like a sail,
Or the golden boreal lights that hang across our Northern trail.

In astonishment the dancers halted. Then the voice said "Peace!
Let my son Argalioth come near. It is a gift of peace.
Henceforth only truth and goodness, finding virtue, shall find peace."

Then the lad arose and went behind the veil, and all was still.
Slowly, as from out all distance, rising far and fine and shrill,
Came a flute-note, strong as sea-wind, clear as morning on the hill, —

Grew and gained and swelled and triumphed, lingering from tone to tone,
Golden deep to silver treble, pure and passionate and lone,
Marking time to things eternal, touching bounds of spirit's zone,

Filling all the space between with all the wonder and despair —
Reach and compass and fulfilment soul could ever dream or dare —
Of the bliss beyond all telling, when the wild sense grows aware.

Then before those spellbound watchers from the Holy Place returned
The youth, girt in scarlet linen, with a countenance where burned
The great glory of his vision and the secret he had learned.

In his hand a yellow flute-reed bound with seven
silver bands;
From brown foot to red-gold hair a figure that
might haunt all lands
With distraction and enthralment, while this
earth in beauty stands.

Not a word he spoke; serenely trod the marble
to the door;
Set the flute to mouth, and piping strains no ear
had heard before,
Passed out through the golden weather, and no
man beheld him more.

Yet there lingered, ah, what music! Not a lis-
tener in that throng,
Through the years that came upon him, but at
times would hear the long
Piercing and melodious cadence, summer-sweet
and autumn-strong,

Heard so long ago; and always, as if musing, he would say,
"It is Hathor's magic flute. In some blue valley far away,
By a well among the palms her wanderer has paused to play!"

For through all the earth he wandered with his magic pipe; and none
Heard that piping, but they straightway knew that their old life was done,
And the glamour was upon them, prudence lost and freedom won.

He it was who touched with madness, soft sweet madness of the spring,
The green-throated frogs, whose chorus makes the grassy meadows ring,
And the birds who come with April, and must break their heart or sing;

Touched his fellow mortals even with a madness
of the mind,
Till they, too, must rise and follow, leaving
sober tasks behind,
While a thing called love possessed them with
a craving sweet and blind,

And they knew no fear thereafter, save the one
supreme despair, —
Having loved, to lose the loved one, the one
lovely friend could share
The vast loneliness of being. What mute bitter-
ness were there!

And we all are Hathor's children, brothers of the
frogs and birds,
Who have listened once forever to the pipe whose
magic words
None can fathom, though we follow dumbly as
the flocks and herds.

Thenceforth howsoe'er we wander, all our care
is but to know
Truth, the Sorceress whose spell of beauty can
entrance us so,
As it was with happy lovers in their wisdom long
ago.

And to all men once a lifetime comes that music
sweet and shrill,
Pleading for the life's perfection, good's prefer-
ment over ill,
Beauty's issue from debasement, the deliverance
of will.

Many hear it not, or hearing turn with heedless
hearts away,
Or their soul is deaf with greed or lust or anger
or dismay,
And the precious fateful moment passes. But
the wise are they,

Who preserve without disquiet the serene and
open mind,
The impassioned poise of spirit, lodged in senses
more refined
Than the quaking aspen breathed on by the un-
seen secret wind.

So in spite of tears and turmoil many a radiant
hour they know,
Hearing o'er the roofs of men the far off magic
woodpipes blow,
With a message for the morrow bidding them
arise and go.

And that message? What I cherish most, this
sweet white night of June,
When from sheath of fragrant lace-work slips one
shoulder, like the moon
From the pine-tops with a lustre such as made
its lover swoon.

Once on Latmus; when your hair falls, like a vine the stars peep through;
When I kiss your heart out, much as mighty Pan the reed-pith drew,
And your breath in one "Beloved!" answers like the reed he blew;

What I prize most, and most treasure, is this knowledge great and sure:
He who knows love, knows the secret, — he who has love has the lure, —
Of the strain whereto this earth was moulded well and must endure.

Hush, ah, hush! Lie still! The music is not yet gone from the firs,
Haply here the Ancient Mother, in this solitude of hers,
Where the mighty veil of silence, leaves and stars, the hill-wind stirs,

Some new larger revelation would vouchsafe
to you and me
Of the sorceries of summer or the secret of the
sea,
Whose sheer beauty shall enthral us while its
truth shall set us free.

O my golden Syrinx, surely we have heard the
magic flute,
Whose dark wild mysterious transport in a
moment can transmute
All the heart and life forever, making spirits
that were mute

Musical and glad! And we have listened to
that lost flute-strain,
Whose long sweet and sobbing minor is the
record of the rain, —
Whose proud passion is the gladness when the
spring comes back again.

Hark, the thrushes at their fluting! The old wizardry and stress
Of entrancement are upon them. Wise ones of the wilderness,
Who can say but they have burdens of a joy beyond our guess?

Long since did the magic minstrel take them silent from the bough
In his hands, and with the secret breath of life their throats endow,
As this rose-red mouth of beauty burning meward I do now!

A SHEPHERD IN LESBOS.

All night long my cabin roof resounded
With the mighty murmur of the rain;
All night long I heard the silver cohorts
Tramping down the valley to the plain;

All night long the ringing rain-drops volleyed
On the hollow drum-heads of the leaves
In a wild tattoo, while gusty hill-winds
Fifed The Young Pans' March about the eaves.

So all night within the mountain forest
Passed the shadowy forces at review;
And they bore me back to time's beginning
When the wonder of the world was new.

Then from out the gloom there came a vision
Of the beauty of the earth of old, —
The unclouded face and gracious figure,
Filleted with laurel and green-stoled,

Such as Daphne wore the day she wandered
Through the silent beech-wood of the god,
When a sunray through the roof of shadows
Wheeled and stole behind her where she trod, —

When the loveliness of earth, transfigured
By one touch of rapture, grew divine,
Ere it fled before the unveiled presence
To indwell forever its green shrine.

Like a mist I saw the hair's gold glory,
The grave eyes, the childish scarlet lip,
And the rose-pink fervour that afforded
Soul the sheath to fill from tip to tip.

On her mouth she laid a warning finger,
And her slow calm enigmatic smile
Told me, ere she spoke, one-half the message;
Then I heard (my heart stood still the while),

"Mortal, wouldst thou know the maddening
transport
No mere earth-born lover may attain,
Till some woodland deity hath loved him,
And her beauty mounted to his brain?

"Thenceforth he becomes, with her for mistress,
Master of the moods and minds of men,
Moulding as he will their deeds and daring,
All their follies open to his ken;

"Yet is he a wanderer forever,
Without respite seeking the unknown.
Wouldst thou leave the world for one who offers
But the beauty bounded by her zone?"

When I woke in golden morning dyeing
The dark valley and the purple hill,
Flushing at the doorway of the forest,
Flowered my mountain laurel, cool and still.

How I chose? Have ye not heard in Lesbos
Of a mad young shepherd by the shore,
Whose wild piping bids the traveller tarry
Some immortal sorrow to deplore?

On a morning by the river marges
Many a passer-by hath heard that strain,
Sweet and sad and strange and full of longing
As a bird-note through the purple rain.

In a maze the haunted music holds them
With its meaning past all guess or care;
With its magic note the lonely cadence
Swells and sinks and dies upon the air;

And they say, " It is the stricken shepherd
Whom the nymph's enchantment set astray,
And the spell of his bewildering vision
Holds him fast a lover from that day.

" His dark theme no mortal may interpret;
But forever when the wood-pipes blow,
Some remembered and mysterious echo
Calls us unresisting and we go."

DAPHNE.

I know that face!
In some lone forest place,
When June brings back the laurel to the hills,
Where shade and sunlight lace,

Where all day long
The brown birds make their song —
A music that seems never to have known
Dismay nor haste nor wrong —

I once before
Have seen thee by the shore,
As if about to shed the flowery guise
And be thyself once more.

Dear, shy, soft face,
With just the elfin trace
That lends thy human beauty the last touch
Of wild, elusive grace!

Can it be true,
A god did once pursue
Thy gleaming beauty through the glimmering wood,
Drenched in the Dorian dew,

Too mad to stay
His hot and headstrong way,
Demented by the fragrance of thy flight,
Heedless of thy dismay?

But I to thee
More gently fond would be,
Nor less a lover woo thee with soft words
And woodland melody;

Take pipe and play
Each forest fear away;
Win thee to idle in the leafy shade
All the long Summer day;

Tell thee old tales
Of love, that still avails
More than all mighty things in this great world,
Still wonderworks nor fails;

Teach thee new lore,
How to love more and more,
And find the magical delirium
In joys unguessed before.

I would try over
And over to discover
Some wild, sweet, foolish, irresistible
New way to be thy lover—

New, wondrous ways
To fill thy golden days,
Thy lovely pagan body with delight,
Thy loving heart with praise.

For I would learn,
Deep in the brookside fern,
The magic of the syrinx whispering low
With bubbly fall and turn;

Mock every note
Of the green woodbird's throat,
Till some wild strain, impassioned yet serene,
Should form and float

Far through the hills,
Where mellow sunlight fills
The world with joy, and from the purple vines
The brew of life distils.

Ah, then indeed
Thy heart should have no need
To tremble at a footfall in the brake,
And bid thy bright limbs speed.

But night would come,
And I should make thy home
In the deep pines, lit by a yellow star
Hung in the dark blue dome —

A fragrant house
Of woven balsam boughs,
Where the great Cyprian mother should receive
Our warm unsullied vows.

THE LOST DRYAD.

Where are you gone from the forest,
Leaving the mountain-side lonely
And all the beech woods deserted,
O my dear Daphne?

All the day long I go seeking
Trace of your flowerlike footprint.
Will not the dew on the meadow
Tell tale of Daphne?

Will not the sand on the sea-shore
Treasure that magical impress
For the disconsolate longing
Lover of Daphne?

Will not the moss and the fern-bed
Bearing the mould of her beauty,
Tell me where wandered and rested
Rose-golden Daphne?

All the night through I go hearkening
Every wild murmurous echo,—
Hint of your laughter,— the birdlike
Voice of my Daphne.

Why do the poplar leaves whisper
Things to themselves in the silence,
Though no wind visits the valley,
Daphne, my Daphne?

Listen! I hear their small voices,
An elfin multitude, mingle,
Lisping in silver-leaf language,
"Daphne, O Daphne!"

THE LOST DRYAD

Listen! I hear the cold hill-brook
Plash down the clove on its pebbles,
And the ravine drenched in moonlight
Echoing, "Daphne!"

"Daphne," the rain says at nightfall;
"Daphne," the wind breathes at morning;
And a voice troubles the hot noon
Uttering "Daphne."

Ah, what impassioned remembrance,
In the dark pines in the starlight,
Touches the dream of your wood-thrush,
O my lost Daphne,

Dyeing his sleep like a bubble
Coloured for joy, and the note comes,
Golden, enchanted, eternal,
Calling for Daphne!

THE LOST DRYAD

O Mother Earth, at how many
Thresholds of lone-dwelling mortals
Must I, a wayfarer, tarry,
Asking for Daphne? —

How many times see their faces
Fade to incredulous wonder,
Hearing in some remote vale
The story of Daphne,

Ere I at last through the twilight
Hear the soft rapturous outcry,
And as of old there will greet me
Far-wandered Daphne?

THE DEAD FAUN.

Who hath done this thing? What wonder is
this that lies
On the green earth so still under purple skies,
Like a hyacinth shaft the careless mower has
cut
And thought of no more?

Who hath wrought this pitiful wrong on the
lovely earth?
What ruthless hand could ruin that harmless
mirth?
O heart of things, what undoing is here, never
now
To be mended more!

No more, O beautiful boy, shall thy fleet feet
stray
Through the cool beech wood on the shadowy
mountain way,
Nor halt by the well at noon, nor trample the
flowers
On the forest floor.

Thy beautiful light-seeing gold-green eyes, so
glad
When day came over the hill, so wondrous sad
When the burning sun went slowly under the
sea,
Shall look no more.

Thy nimble fingers that plucked the fruit from
the bough,
Or fondled the nymph's bright hair and filleted
brow,
Or played the wild mellow pipe of thy father
Pan,
Shall play no more.

Thy sensitive ears that knew all the speech of
the wood,
Every call of the birds and the creatures, and
understood
What the wind to the water said, what the
river replied,
Shall hear no more.

Thy scarlet and lovely mouth which the dryads
knew,
Dear whimsical ardent mouth that love spoke
through,
For all the kisses of life that it took and gave,
Shall say no more.

Who hath trammelled those feet that never
again shall rove?
Who hath bound these hands that never again
shall move?
Who hath quenched the lamp in those eyes that
never again
Shall be lighted more?

Who hath stopped those ears from our heart-
broken words forever?
Who hath sealed that wonderful mouth with its
secret forever?
Who hath touched this innocent being with
pitiless death,
And he is no more?

He was fair as a mortal and spiritual as a
flower;
He knew no hate, but was happy within the
hour.
The Gods had given him beauty and freedom
and joy,
Could they give no more?

Is all their wisdom and power so fond a thing?
Must he perish, nor ever return with returning
Spring,
But be left like a dead-ripe fruit on the ground
for a stranger
To find and deplore?

They have given to mortal man the immortal
scope,
The perilous chance, unrest and remembrance
and hope,
That imperfection may come to perfection still
By some fabled shore.

Did they give this being, this marvellous work
of their hands,
No breath of the greater life with its grief and
demands?
Do beauty and love without bitter knowledge
attain
This and no more?

The wind may whisper to him, he will heed
no more;
The leaves may murmur and lisp, he will
laugh no more;
The oreads weep and be heavy at heart for
him,
He will care no more.

The reverberant thrushes may peal from the
hemlock glooms,
The summer clouds be woven on azure looms;
He is done with all lovely things of earth for-
ever
And ever more.

HYLAS.

Cool were the grey-mottled beeches,
Quiet with noon were the fern-beds,
Where by the bubbling spring water
Tarried young Hylas.

Whistling a song of the rowers,
Dipping his jar till it gurgled,
Suddenly there the bright naiads
(Woe for thee, Hylas!)

Looked and beheld his fair beauty
Better their well-head, and straightway
Exquisite longing possessed them
Only for Hylas.

When he returned not at sundown,
" Over long," said his companions,
As slow dismay came upon them,
" Tarries young Hylas."

Never again did his comrades
Find the lost rower, nor maidens
See from their doorways at twilight
Home-coming Hylas.

Thenceforth another must labour
To the timed thud of his rowlock,
And only legends keep tally
Of the lost Hylas.

Yet even now, when the springtime
Verdures the valley, and rain-winds
Voyage for lands undiscovered,
As once did Hylas,

With a great star on the hill-crest
In purple evening, a flute-note
Pierces the dusk, and a voice calls,
"Hylas, Hylas!"

AT PHÆDRA'S TOMB.

What old grey ruin can this be,
Beside the blue Saronic Sea?
What tomb is this, what temple here,
Thus side by side so many a year?

This is that temple Phædra built
To Aphrodite, having spilt
Her whole heart's great warm love in vain,
One lovely mortal's love to gain;
Yet trusting by that fervent will,
Consuming and unconquered still,
In spite of failure and of fate,
By favour of the gods to sate
Her splendid lost imperious
Mad love for young Hippolytus,
Whose brilliant beauty seemed to glow

Like a tall Alp in rosy snow,
While love and passion, wind and fire,
Flared through the field of her desire.

" Great Mother, come from Paphos now
With benediction on thy brow,
And pity ! Not beneath the sun
Lives such another hapless one.
O Aphrodite of the sea,
For love have mercy upon me !
Give me his beauty now to slake
This body's longing and soul's ache !
Touch his cold heart until he know
The divine sorrow of love's woe."

What madness hers, what folly his !
And all their beauty come to this
Epitome of mortal doom —
A name, a story, and a tomb !

Have ye not seen the fog from sea
On Autumn mornings silently
Steal in to land, and wrap the sun
With its grey, cold oblivion?

The goddess would not smile on her,
On him no gentler mood confer.
He still must flush his maiden whim;
She still must leash her love for him,
A fancy lawless and superb,
Too wild to tame, too strong to curb,
Too great for her to swerve or stay
In our half-hearted modern way.

Have ye not seen the fog from land
Blow out to sea, and leave the band
Of orange marsh and lilac shore
To brood in Autumn peace once more?

So there survives the magic fame
Of her imperishable name,—
Light from a time when love was great,
And strong hearts had no fear of fate,
But lived and strove and wrought and died,
With beauty for their only guide.

And yet this temple, raised and wrought
With prayers and tears, availed her naught.
The years with it have had their will;
Her soft name is a by-word still
For thwarted spirit, vexed and teased
By yearnings that cannot be eased,—
The soul that chafes upon the mesh
Of tenuous yet galling flesh.

How blue that midday shadow is
In the white dust of Argolis! . . .
This is her tomb. . . . See, near at hand,
This myrtle! Here she used to stand

Those days when her love-haunted eyes
Saw her new-builded hope arise,
Watching the masons set the stone
And fingering her jewelled zone,
Or moving restless to and fro,
Her pale brows knit a little, so.

Look! every leaf pierced through and through!
I doubt not the gold pin she drew
From her dark hair, and, as the storm
Of love swept through her lovely form
With pique and passion, thrust on thrust,
Vented her vehemence. O dust,
That once entempled such a flame
With beauty, colour, line and name,
And gave great Love a dwelling-place
Behind so fair, so sad a face,
Where is thy wilful day-dream now,
That passionate lip, that moody brow?

AT PHÆDRA'S TOMB

Ah, fair Greek woman, if there bloom
Some flower of knowledge in the gloom,
Receive the piteous, loving sigh
Of one more luckless passer-by.
Peace, peace, wild heart! Unsatisfied
Has every mortal lived and died,
Since thy dear beauty found a bed
Forever with the dreaming dead,
In seagirt Hellas long ago,
Immortal for thy mortal woe!

A YOUNG PAN'S PRAYER

O pipes of Pan,
Make me a man,
As only your piercing music can!
When I set my lip
To your reedy lip,
And you feel the urging man-breath slip

Through fibre and flake,
Bidding you wake
To the strange new being for beauty's sake,
I pray there be
Returned to me
The strength of the hills and the strength of the sea.

A YOUNG PAN'S PRAYER

O river reed,
In whom the need
Of the journeying river once was freed,
As of old your will
Was the water's will,
To quiver and call or sleep and be still,

So now anew
I breathe in you
The ardour no alchemy can subdue,
And add the dream,—
The immortal gleam
That never yet fell on meadow or stream.

I breathe and blow
On your dumb mouth so,
Till your lurking soul is alive and aglow.
Ah, breathe in me
The strength of the sea,
The calm of the hills and the strength of the sea!

A YOUNG PAN'S PRAYER

Love, joy, and fear,
From my faint heart here,
Shall melt in your cadence wild and clear.
With freedom and hope
I range and grope,
Till I find new stops in your earthly scope.

The pleading strain
Of pathos and pain,
The diminished chord and the lost refrain;
The piercing sigh,
The joyous cry,
The sense of what shall be bye and bye;

The grief untold
Out of man's heart old,
Which endures that another may still be bold;
The wiser will
That foregoes self-will
And aspires to truth beyond trammel or ill;

Ambition unsure,
And the splendid lure
Of whim in his harlequin vestiture;
And the reach of sound
Into thought's profound;
All these I add to your power earth-bound;

But most, the awe
That perceives where law
Is revealed at last without fault or flaw,—
The touch of mind
That would search and find
The measure of beauty, the purpose of kind.

So with the fire
Of man's desire
Your notes shall outreach the mountain choir.
Brook, breeze, and bird
Shall hear the Word,
And know 'tis their master they have heard.

And the lowly reed,
Whose only need
Was to sigh with the wind in the river weed,
Shall be heard as far
As from star to star,
Where Algol answers to Algebar.

For the soul must trace
Her wondrous race
By a seventh sense on the charts of space,
Till she come at last,
Through the vague and vast,
To her own heart's haven fixed and fast.

O pipes of Pan,
Whose music ran
Through the world ere ever my age began,
When I set my lip
To your woodland lip,
I pray some draft of your virtue slip

From each mellow throat,
As note by note,
A learner, I try for the secret rote,—
The rhythm and theme
That shall blend man's dream
Of perfection with nature's imperfect scheme!

Blow low, blow high,
Your haunting cry
For me, a wayfarer passing by;
Blow soft or keen,
I shall listen and lean
To catch what your whispered messages mean.

I shall hear, and heed
The voice of the reed,
And be glad of my kinfolk's word, indeed.
I shall hearken and hear
Your untroubled cheer
From the earth's deep heart, serene and clear.

A YOUNG PAN'S PRAYER

Blow cold and shrill,
As the wind from the hill,
I yet shall follow to learn your will;
Blow soft and warm,
As an April storm,
I shall listen and feel my soul take form.

Blow glad and strong,
As the grosbeak's song,
And I mount with you over hurt and wrong;
Blow little and thin,
As the cricket's din;
But my door is wide, and I bid them in.

Blow, blow till there be
Inbreathed in me
Tinge of the loam and tang of the sea,—
A vagrom man,
Favoured of Pan,
Made out of ardour and sinew and tan,

A YOUNG PAN'S PRAYER

With the seeing eye
For meadow and sky,
The want only beauty can satisfy,
And the wandering will,
The questing will,
The inquisitive, glad, unanxious will,

That must up and away
On the brave essay
Of the fair and far through the long sweet day,—
Of the fine and true,
The wondrous and new,
All the warm radiant bright world through.

Blow me the tune
Of the ripe red moon,
I shall sleep like a child by the roadside soon;
And the tune of the sun;
When our piping is done,
Lo, others shall finish what we have begun.

For the spell we cast
Shall prevail at last,—
When fault is forgotten and failure past,—
Prevail and restore
To earth once more
The lost enchantment, the wonder-lore.

And I must attain
To the road again,
With the wandering dust and the wandering rain,—
A sojourner too
My way pursue,
Who am spirit and substance, even as you.

Then give me the slow
Large will to grow,
As your fellows down by the brookside grow.
Ah, blow, and breed
In my manhood's need
The long sweet patience of flower and seed!

A YOUNG PAN'S PRAYER

O pipes of Pan,
Make me a man,
As only your earthly music can;
And create in me
From your melody
The strength of the hills and the strength of the sea!

THE TIDINGS TO OLAF.

This is a question arose in the Norseland long ago,
About the time of Yule, the season of joy and snow.
To-morrow, our Christmas Day, can you answer straight and true,
After these thousand years, when the question comes to you?

Olaf sat on his throne, and the priest of Thor stood by;
And the King's eyes were grey as the December sky.

"Whom shall we serve, O King — the god of thy fathers, Thor,
Who made us lords of the sea, and gave us our land in war,

"Who follows our battle flag over the barren brine,
Who braces the bursting heart when the rowers bend in line,

"Who hath made us the fear of the world and the envy of the earth,
Whose splendour sustains us in death, who hath given us plenty for dearth,

"Or this poor, thought-ridden Jew, an outcast whose head was priced
At thirty pieces of silver, this friendless anarchist, Christ?

"Is not thine empire spread over the Western Isles?
Are not thy people sown wherever the sun-path smiles?

"Do there not come to thee iron and gems
and corn?
Does not thy glory blaze wherever our trade
is borne?

"Over the red sea-rim thy galleys go down
with the sun;
Beyond the gates of the storm thy written
mandates run.

"Behold, new lands arise to the lift of thy dar-
ing prows,
And health and riches and joy prosper thy fir-
built house.

"Is there lack to thee of aught the strength of
thy folk can give,
When the will and the longing come to stretch
out thy hand and live?

"Honey and fruit and wine, are they not piled on the board?
Do not a hundred tribes pay tribute to our Lord?

"Olaf, beloved of the gods! Is there an outland tongue,
Is there an isle of the sea where thy praise has not been sung?

"Scarlet and silk and gold gleam on thy breast and brow.
Had the kings of the earth of old such honour and freedom as thou?

"Might and dominion and power and majesty, are they not thine?
Will the seed of warrior kings dishonour the war-god's shrine?

"O King, do I speak this day in thy name, or forevermore
Let perish the ancient creed? By thy grace, is it Christ or Thor?"

Olaf sat on his throne. And the Priest of Thor gave place
To a pale dark monk. All eyes were bent on the stranger's face.

"O King, how shall I speak and answer this wisdom of eld?
Yet the new trees of the forest spring up where the old are felled.

"When the sombre and ancient firs are laid in the dust, in your North,
The tender young green of the birch and the delicate aspen put forth.

"Is the land left naked and bare, because the brush-fires have run?
Ye have seen the soft carpet of fern spread down where the blackening was done.

"With beauty God covers the ground, no acre too poor to befriend,
That thou and I and all men may perceive and comprehend.

"He carries the sea in His hand, He lights the stars in the sky,
And whispers over thy soul as the shadows move on the rye.

"The King has his kingly state, but his heart is the heart of man,
Swept over by clouds of grief, then sunlit with joy for a span.

"And every living spirit that is clothed with flesh and bone
Is just so much of God's being, His presence revealed and known.

"We are part of God's breath, as the gust, whereby thy hearth-fire is fanned,
Is part of the wild north-wind that rolls the breakers to land.

"We are a part of His life, as the waves are a part of the sea,
A moment uplift in the sun, then merged in eternity.

"What is it, O man and King, that stretches between us twain,
Like the living tides that gird the islands of the main?

"What lifts thy name, Olaf, aloft on the shout
of thy folk in war?
What keeps it warm by the hearth? Is it the
favour of Thor?

"No! 'Tis the love of thy people, the great
common love of thy kind,
The thing that is old as the sun and stronger
than the wind.

"And, Olaf, all these things, these goods
which thy priest proclaims,
That make thee a lord among men, and give
thee a name above names,

"Are gifts of the spirit of love. Take away
love, and thy throne
Melts like a word on the air; thou art a name
unknown.

"Is the King heavy at heart, and no man can tell him why;
What does his glory avail to put the heaviness by?

"But like any poor nameless man among men, the mighty King
Is heartened among his folk by the simple love they bring.

"Is the King weary in mind, and none can lighten his mood;
What cheers him to power anew but thought of his people's good?

"To love, to know, and to do! So we grow perfect apace,
The human made more divine, as the old to the new gives place.

"But who will show us the way, — be lantern and staff and girth?
Where is the Light of the World and the Sweetness of the Earth?

"The King has a thousand men, yet one more brave than the rest;
The King has a hundred bards, yet one the wisest and best;

"The King has a score of friends, yet one most accounted of.
And now, if these three were one, in courage, in wisdom and love,

"There were the matchless friend, whose cause should enlist all lands,
Gentle, intrepid, and true. And there, O King, Christ stands.

"Freedom and knowledge and joy, not mine
nor any man's,
But open to all the earth without proscription
or bans,

"Where is the bringer of these? His hand is
upon thy door.
And He who knocks, O King, is a greater God
than Thor.

"Olaf, 'tis Yule in the world; the old creeds
groan and fall,
The ice of doubt at their heart, the snows of
fear over all.

"But now, even now, O friends, deep down in
the kindly earth,
Are not the marvellous seeds awaiting the hour
of birth?

"Even now in the sunlit places, do not the saplings prepare
To unfold their new growth to the light, unsheathe their rich buds on the air?

"And so, from the dark, sweet mould of the human heart will arise,
To enmorning the world with light and this life emparadise,

"The deathless, young glory of love. And valley and hill and plain
And fields and cities of men, they shall not sorrow again.

"For there shall be freedom and peace and beauty in that far spring,
And folk shall go forth without fear, and be glad at their work and sing.

"And men will hallow this day with His name
who died on the tree,
For the cause of eternal love, in the service of
liberty.

"O King, shall the feet of Truth come in
through thy open door,
Or alone out of all the world be debarred? Is
it Christ or Thor?"

The King sat on his throne, and the two priests
stood by.
And Olaf's eyes grew mild as a blue April sky.

Thus were the tidings to Olaf brought in the early days,
To be a lamp in his house, and a sign-post in the ways.
And you, O men and women, does it concern you at all,
That Truth still cries at the cross-roads, and you do not heed his call?

THE PRAYER IN THE ROSE GARDEN.

Lord of this rose garden,
At the end of May,
Where thy guests are bidden
To tarry for a day,

Through the sweet white falling
Of the tender rain,
With thy roses theeward
Lift this dust again.

Make the heart within me
That crumbles to obey,
Perceive and know thy secret
Desire from day to day;

Even as thy roses,
Knowing where they stand
Before the wind, thy presence,
Tremble at thy hand.

Make me, Lord, for beauty,
Only this I pray,
Like my brother roses,
Growing day by day,

Body, mind and spirit,
As thy voice may urge
From the wondrous twilight
At the garden's verge,

Till I be as they be,
Fair, then blown away,
With a name like attar,
Remembered for a day.


PIPES OF PAN
FROM THE GREEN BOOK OF THE BARDS

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Published, May, 1903

TO THE

MEMORY OF MY FRIEND

Edward Nathan Gibbs

Out of doors are budding trees, calling birds, and opening flowers,
Purple rainy distances, fragrant winds and lengthening hours.

Only in the loving heart, with its unforgetting mind,
There is grief for seasons gone and the friend it cannot find.

For upon this lovely earth mortal sorrow still must bide,
And remembrance still must lurk like a pang in beauty's side.

Ah, one wistful heartache now April with her joy must bring,
And the want of you return always with returning spring!

New York, April, 1903.

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"LORD OF MY HEART'S ELATION."

Lord of my heart's elation,
Spirit of things unseen,
Be thou my aspiration
Consuming and serene!

Bear up, bear out, bear onward
This mortal soul alone,
To selfhood or oblivion,
Incredibly thine own, —

As the foamheads are loosened
And blown along the sea,
Or sink and merge forever
In that which bids them be.

I, too, must climb in wonder,
Uplift at thy command, —
Be one with my frail fellows
Beneath wind's strong hand,

A fleet and shadowy column
Of dust or mountain rain,
To walk the earth a moment
And be dissolved again.

Be thou my exaltation
Or fortitude of mien,
Lord of the world's elation
Thou breath of things unseen!

THE GREEN BOOK OF THE BARDS.

There is a book not written
By any human hand,
The prophets all have studied,
The priests have always banned.

I read it every morning,
I ponder it by night;
And Death shall overtake me
Trimming my humble light.

He'll say, as did my father
When I was young and small,
"My son, no time for reading!
The night awaits us all."

He'll smile, as did my father
When I was small and young,
That I should be so eager
Over an unknown tongue.

Then I would leave my volume
And willingly obey, —
Get me a little slumber
Against another day.

Content that he who taught me
Should bid me sleep awhile,
I would expect the morning
To bring his courtly smile ;

New verses to decipher,
New chapters to explore,
While loveliness and wisdom
Grew ever more and more.

For who could ever tire
Of that wild legendry,
The folk-lore of the mountains,
The drama of the sea?

I pore for days together
Over some lost refrain, —
The epic of the thunder,
The lyric of the rain.

This was the creed and canon
Of Whitman and Thoreau,
And all the free believers
Who worshipped long ago.

Here Amiel in sadness,
And Burns in pure delight,
Sought for the hidden import
Of man's eternal plight.

No Xenophon nor Cæsar
This master had for guide,
Yet here are well recorded
The marches of the tide.

Here are the marks of greatness
Accomplished without noise,
The Elizabethan vigour,
And the Landorian poise;

The sweet Chaucerian temper,
Smiling at all defeats;
The gusty moods of Shelley,
The autumn calms of Keats.

Here were derived the gospels
Of Emerson and John;
'Twas with this revelation
The face of Moses shone.

Here Blake and Job and Omar
The author's meaning traced;
Here Virgil got his sweetness,
And Arnold his unhaste.

Here Horace learned to question,
And Browning to reply,
When Soul stood up on trial
For her mortality.

And all these lovely spirits
Who read in the great book,
Then went away in silence
With their illumined look,

Left comment, as time furnished
A margin for their skill, —
Their guesses at the secret
Whose gist eludes us still.

And still in that green volume,
With ardour and with youth
Undaunted, my companions
Are searching for the truth.

One page, entitled Grand Pré,
Has the idyllic air
That Bion might have envied:
I set a foot-note there.

FIRST CROAK.

Northward, crow,
Croak and fly!
Tell her I
Long to go,—

Only am
Satisfied
Where the wide
Maples flame,

Over those
Hills of fir,
Flooding her
Morning snows.

Thou shalt see
Break and sing
Days of spring,
Dawning free.

Northward, crow,
Croak and fly, —
Strive, or die
Striving so!

Darker hearts,
We, than some
Who shall come
When spring starts.

Well I see,
You and I
By and by
Shall get free.

Only now,
Beat away
As we may
Best know how!

Never soar
We, nor float;
But one note,
And no more.

Northward, crow,
Croak and fly!
Would that I
Too might go!

Lark or thrush
Someday, you
Up the blue
Cleave the hush.

O the joy
Then you feel,
Who shall steal
Or destroy?

Have not I
Known how good,
Field and wood,
Stream and sky? —

Longed to free
Soul in flight,
Night by night,
Tree to tree?

Northward, crow,
Croak and fly
You and I, —
Striving, go.

Still though fail
Singing, keep
Croaking deep
Strong and hale!

Flying straight,
Soon we go
Where the snow
Tarries late.

Yet the spring
Is — how sweet!
Hark that beat;
Goldenwing!

Good for all
Faint of heart,
What a start
In his call!

FIRST CROAK

Northward, crow,
Croak and fly,
Though the sky
Thunder No!

A SUPPLICATION.

O April, angel of our mortal joy,
Consoler of our human griefs and fears,
Bringer of sunshine to this old grey earth,
Hear once again the prayer of thy lone child,
Return, return!

Mother of solace in the soft spring rain,
Restorer of sane health to wounded souls,
Ah, tarry not thy coming to our doors,
But soon with twilight and the robin's voice,
Return.

Behold, across the borders of the world,
We wait thy reappearance with the flowers,
Disconsolate, dispirited, forlorn,
Our only childish and perpetual prayer,
"Return, return!"

APRIL WEATHER.

Soon, ah, soon the April weather
With the sunshine at the door,
And the mellow melting rain-wind
Sweeping from the South once more.

Soon the rosy maples budding,
And the willows putting forth,
Misty crimson and soft yellow
In the valleys of the North.

Soon the hazy purple distance,
Where the cabined heart takes wing,
Eager for the old migration
In the magic of the spring.

Soon, ah, soon the budding windflowers
Through the forest white and frail,
And the odorous wild cherry
Gleaming in her ghostly veil.

Soon about the waking uplands
The hepaticas in blue, —
Children of the first warm sunlight
In their sober Quaker hue, —

All our shining little sisters
Of the forest and the field,
Lifting up their quiet faces
With the secret half revealed.

Soon across the folding twilight
Of the round earth hushed to hear,
The first robin at his vespers
Calling far, serene and clear.

Soon the waking and the summons,
Starting sap in bole and blade,
And the bubbling, marshy whisper
Seeping up through bog and glade.

Soon the frogs in silver chorus
Through the night, from marsh and swale,
Blowing in their tiny oboes
All the joy that shall not fail, —

Passing up the old earth rapture
By a thousand streams and rills,
From the red Virginian valleys
To the blue Canadian hills.

Soon, ah, soon the splendid impulse,
Nomad longing, vagrant whim,
When a man's false angels vanish
And the truth comes back to him.

Soon the majesty, the vision,
And the old unfaltering dream,
Faith to follow, strength to stablish,
Will to venture and to seem;

All the radiance, the glamour,
The expectancy and poise,
Of this ancient life renewing
Its temerities and joys.

Soon the immemorial magic
Of the young Aprilian moon,
And the wonder of thy friendship
In the twilight — soon, ah, soon!

SPRING MAGIC.

This morning soft and brooding
In the warm April rain,
The doors of sense are opened
To set me free again.

I pass into the colour
And fragrance of the flowers,
And melt with every bird-cry
To haunt the mist-blue showers.

I thrill in crimson quince-buds
To raptures without name;
And in the yellow tulips
Burn with a pure still flame.

SPRING MAGIC

I blend with the soft shadows
Of the young maple leaves,
And mingle in the rain-drops
That shine along the eaves.

I lapse among the grasses
That green the river's brink;
And with the shy wood creatures
Go down at need to drink.

I fade in silver music,
Whose fine unnumbered notes
The frogs and rainy fifers
Blow from their reedy throats.

No glory is too splendid
To house this soul of mine,
No tenement too lowly
To serve it for a shrine.

How is it we inherit
This marvel of new birth,
Sharing the ancient wonder
And miracle of earth?

What wisdom, what enchantment,
What magic of Green Fire,
Could make the dust and water
Obedient to desire?

Keep thou, by some large instinct,
Unwasted, fair, and whole,
The innocence of nature,
The ardour of the soul;

And through the house of being
Thou art at liberty
To pass, enjoy, and linger,
Inviolate and free.

THE ENCHANTRESS.

Have you not seen a witch to-day
Go dancing through the misty woods,
Her mad young beauty hid beneath
A tattered gown of crimson buds?

She glinted through the alder swamp,
And loitered by the willow stream,
Then vanished down the wood-road dim,
With bare brown throat and eyes a-dream.

The wild white cherry is her flower,
Her bird the flame-bright oriole;
She comes with freedom and with peace,
And glad temerities of soul.

Her lover is the great Blue Ghost,
Who broods upon the world at noon,
And wooes her wonder to his will
At setting of the frail new moon.

THE MADNESS OF ISHTAR.

Vermilion and ashen and azure,
Pigment of leaf and wing,
What will the sorceress Ishtar
Make out of colour and spring?

Of old was she not Aphrodite,
She who is April still,
Mistress of longing and beauty,
The sea, and the Hollow Hill?

Ashtoreth, Tanis, Astarte —
A thousand names she has borne,
Since the first new moon's white magic
Was laid on a world forlorn.

Odour of tulip and cherry,
Scent of the apple blow,
Tang of the wild arbutus —
These to her crucible go.

Honey of lilac and willow,
The spoil of the plundering bees,
Savour of sap from the maples —
What will she do with these?

Oboe and flute in the forest,
And pipe in the marshy ground,
And the upland call of the flicker —
What will she make of sound?

Start of the green in the meadow,
Push of the seed in the mould,
Burst of the bud into blossom —
What will her cunning unfold?

The waning belt of Orion,
The crescent zone of the moon —
What is the mystic transport
We shall see accomplished soon?

The sun and the rain and the South wind,
With all the treasure they bring —
What will the sorceress Ishtar
Make from the substance of spring?

She will gather the blue and the scarlet,
The yellow and crimson dye,
And weave them into a garment
Of magical texture and ply.

And whoso shall wear that habit
And favour of the earth,
He shall be lord of his spirit,
The creatures shall know his worth.

She will gather the broken music,
Fitting it chord by chord,
Till the hearer shall learn the meaning,
As a text that has been restored.

She will gather the fragrance of lilacs,
The scent of the cherry flower,
And he who perceives it shall wonder,
And know, and remember the hour.

She will gather the moonlight and starshine,
And breathe on them with desire,
And they shall be changed on the moment
To the marvel of earth's green fire, —

The ardour that kindles and blights not,
Consumes and does not destroy,
Renewing the world with wonder,
And the hearts of men with joy.

For this is the purpose of Ishtar,
In her great lone house of the sky,
Beholding the work of her hands
As it shall be by and by :

Out of the passion and splendour,
Faith, failure and daring, to bring
The illumined dream of the spirit
To perfection in some far spring.

Therefore, shall we not obey her, —
Awake and be glad and aspire, —
Wise with the ancient knowledge,
Touched with the earthly fire ?

In the spell of the wild enchantment
The shy wood creatures know,
Must we not also with Ishtar
Unhindered arise and go ?

Hearing the call and the summons,
Heeding the hint and the sign,
Rapt in the flush and the vision,
Shall we demur or repine?

Dare you deny one impulse,
Dare I one joy suppress?
Knowing the might and dominion,
The lure and the loveliness,

Delirium, glamour, bewitchment,
Bidding earth blossom and sing,
Shall we falter or fail to follow
The voice of our mother in spring?

For Love shall be clothed with beauty,
And walk through the world again,
Hearing the haunted cadence
Of an immortal strain;

Caring not whence he wandered,
Fearing not whither he goes,
Great with the fair new freedom
That every earth-child knows;

Impetuous as the wood-wind,
Ingenuous as a flower,
Glad with the fulness of being,
Born of the perfect hour;

Counting not cost nor issue,
Weighing not end and aim,
Sprung from the clay-built cabin
To powers that have no name.

And with all his soul and body
He shall only seek one thing;
For that is the madness of Ishtar,
Which comes upon earth in spring.

A CREATURE CATECHISM.

I.

Soul, what art thou in the tribes of the sea?

Lord, *said a flying fish*,
Below the foundations of storm
We feel the primal wish
Of the earth take form.

Through the dim green water-fire
We see the red sun loom,
And the quake of a new desire
Takes hold on us down in the gloom.

No more can the filmy drift
Nor drafty currents buoy
Our whim to its bent, nor lift
Our heart to the height of its joy.

When sheering down to the Line
Come polar tides from the North,
Thy silver folk of the brine
Must glimmer and forth.

Down in the crumbling mill
Grinding eternally,
We are the type of thy will
To the tribes of the sea.

II.

Soul, what art thou in the tribes of the air?

Lord, *said a butterfly*,
Out of a creeping thing,
For days in the dust put by,
The spread of a wing

Emerges with pulvil of gold
On a tissue of green and blue,
And there is thy purpose of old
Unspoiled and fashioned anew.

Ephemera, ravellings of sky
And shreds of the Northern light,
We age in a heart-beat and die
Under the eaves of night.

What if the small breath quail,
Or cease at a touch of the frost?
Not a tremor of joy shall fail,
Nor a pulse be lost.

This fluttering life, never still,
Survives to oblivion's despair.
We are the type of thy will
To the tribes of the air.

III.

Soul, what art thou in the tribes of the field?

Lord, *said a maple seed*,
Though well we are wrapped and bound,
We are the first to give heed,
When thy bugles give sound.

We banner thy House of the Hills
With green and vermilion and gold,
When the floor of April thrills
With the myriad stir of the mould,

And her hosts for migration prepare.
We too have the veined twin-wings,
Vans for the journey of air.
With the urge of a thousand springs

Pent for a germ in our side,
We perish of joy, being dumb,
That our race may be and abide
For æons to come.

When rivulet answers to rill
In snow-blue valleys unsealed,
We are the type of thy will
To the tribes of the field.

IV.

Soul, what art thou in the tribes of the ground?

Lord, when the time is ripe,
Said a frog through the quiet rain,
We take up the silver pipe
For the pageant again.

When the melting wind of the South
Is over meadow and pond,
We draw the breath of thy mouth,
Reviving the ancient bond.

Then must we fife and declare
The unquenchable joy of earth, —
Testify hearts still dare,
Signalise beauty's worth.

Then must we rouse and blow
On the magic reed once more,
Till the glad earth-children know
Not a thing to deplore.

When rises the marshy trill
To the soft spring night's profound,
We are the type of thy will
To the tribes of the ground.

v.

Soul, what art thou in the tribes of the earth ?

Lord, *said an artist born*,
We leave the city behind
For the hills of open morn,
For fear of our kind.

Our brother they nailed to a tree
For sedition; they bully and curse
All those whom love makes free.
Yet the very winds disperse

Rapture of birds and brooks,
Colours of sea and cloud, —
Beauty not learned of books,
Truth that is never loud.

We model our joy into clay,
Or help it with line and hue,
Or hark for its breath in stray
Wild chords and new.

For to-morrow can only fulfil
Dreams which to-day have birth;
We are the type of thy will
To the tribes of the earth.

SURSUM CORDA.

I.

The wind on the sea,
The breath of God over the face of the deep,
Whispers a word
The tribes of his watery dominion rejoice having heard.

To-day through the vaultless chambers
Of the sea, below the range
Of light's great beam to fathom,
Soundless, unsearched of change,

There passed more vague than a shadow
Which is, then is no more,
The aura and draft of being,
Like a breath through an open door.

The myriad fins are moving,
The marvellous flanges play;
Herring and shad and menhaden,
They stir and awake and away.

Ungava, Penobscot, Potomac,
Key Largo and Fundy side,
The droves of the frail sea people
Are arun in the vernal tide.

The old sea hunger to herd them,
The old spring fever to drive,
Within them the thrust of an impulse
To wander and joy and thrive;

Below them the lift of the sea-kale,
Before them the fate that shall be;
As it was when the first white summer
Drew the fog from the face of the sea.

II.

The wind on the hills,
The breath of God over the tops of the trees,
Whispers a word
The tribes of his airy dominion rejoice having heard.

Last night we saw the curtain
Of the red aurora wave,
Through the ungirdered heaven
Built without joist or trave,

Fleeting from silence to silence,
As a mirror is stained by a breath, —
The only sign from the Titan
Sleeping in frosty death.

Yet over the world this morning
The old wise trick has been done;
Our legions of rovers and singers,
Arrived and saluting the sun.

The myriad wings atremble,
The marvellous throats astrain,
Come the airy migrant people
In the wake of the purple rain.

One joy that needs no bidding,
One will that does not quail;
The whitethroat up from the barren,
The starling down in the swale;

The honk and clamour of wild geese,
The call of the goldenwing;
From valley to lonely valley,
The long exultation of spring.

III.

The wind on the fields,
The breath of God over the face of the ground,
Whispers a word
The tribes of his leafy dominion rejoice having heard.

Crimson of Indian willow,
Orange of maple plume,
As a web of endless pattern
Falls from a soundless loom,

The wide green marvel of summer
Breaks from catkin and sheath,
So silently only a spirit
Could guess at the spirit beneath.

For these are the moveless people,
Who only abide and endure,
Yet no less feel their heart beat
To the lift of the wild spring lure.

These are the keepers of silence,
Who only adore and are dumb,
With faith's own look of expecting
The bidding they know will come.

The revel of leaves is beginning,
The riot of sap is astir;
Dogwood and peach and magnolia
Have errands they will not defer.

In the long sweet breath of the rainwind,
In the warm, sweet hours of sun,
They arise at the *Sursum corda*,
A thousand uplifted as one.

IV.

The wind in the street,
The breath of God over the roofs of the town,
Whispers a word
The tribes of the Wandering Shadow rejoice having heard.

The tribes of the Wandering Shadow !
Ah, gypsying spirit of man,
What tent hast thou, what solace,
Since the nomad life began ?

Forever, wherever the springtime
Halts by the open door,
The heart-sick are healed in the sunshine,
The sorry are sad no more.

Something brighter than morning
Washes the windowpane;
Something wiser than knowledge
Sits by the hearth again.

Within him the sweet disquiet,
Before him the old dismay,
When the hand of Beauty beckons
The wayfarer must away.

"A brother to him who needs me,
A son to her who needs;
Modest and free and gentle;"
This is his creed of creeds.

To-night when the belt of Orion
Hangs in the linden bough,
The girl will meet her lover
Where the quince is crimson now.

For the sun of a thousand winters
Will stop his pendulous swing,
Ere man be a misbeliever
In the scarlet legend of spring.

THE WORD IN THE BEGINNING.

In principio erat verbum.

PRELUDE.[1]

This is the sound of the Word
From the waters of sleep,
The rain-soft voice that was heard
On the face of the deep,
When the fog was drawn back like a veil, and
the sentinel tides
Were given their thresholds to keep.

The South Wind said, "Come forth,"
And the West Wind said, "Go far!"

[1] Reprinted from *Last Songs from Vagabondia* with the courteous permission of Small, Maynard & Co.

And the silvery sea-folk heard,
Where their weed tents are,
From the long slow lift of the blue through the
Carib keys,
To the thresh on Sable bar.

This is the Word that went by,
Over sun-land and swale,
The long Aprilian cry,
Clear, joyous, and hale,
When the summons went forth to the wild shy
broods of the air,
To bid them once more to the trail.

The South Wind said, "Come forth,"
And the West Wind said, "Be swift!"
The fluttering sky-folk heard,
And the warm dark thrift

Of the nomad blood revived, and they gathered
for flight,
By column and pair and drift.

This is the sound of the Word
From bud-sheath and blade,
When the reeds and the grasses conferred,
And a gold beam was laid
At the taciturn doors of the forest, where tar-
ried the sun,
For a sign they should not be dismayed.

The South Wind said, " Come forth,"
And the West Wind said, " Be glad ! "
The abiding wood-folk heard,
In their new green clad,
Sanguine, mist-silver, and rose, while the sap in
their veins
Welled up as of old all unsad.

This is the Word that flew
Over snow-marsh and glen,
When the frost-bound slumberers knew,
In tree-trunk and den,
Their bidding had come, they questioned not
whence nor why, —
They reckoned not whither nor when.

The South Wind said, "Come forth,"
And the West Wind said, "Be wise!"
The wintering ground-folk heard,
Put the dark from their eyes,
Put the sloth from sinew and thew, to wander
and dare, —
For ever the old surmise!

This is the Word that came
To the spirit of Man,

And shook his soul like a flame
In the breath of a fan,
Till it burned as a light in his eyes, as a colour
that grew
And prospered under the tan.

The South Wind said, "Come forth,"
And the West Wind said, "Be free!"
Then he rose and put on the new garb,
And knew he should be
The master of knowledge and joy, though
sprung from the tribes
Of the earth and the air and the sea.

I.

THE WORD TO THE WATER PEOPLE.

Who hath uttered the formless whisper,
The rumour afloat on the tide,
The need that speaks in the heart,
The craving that will not bide?

For the word without shape is abroad,
The vernal portent of change;
And from winter grounds, empty to-morrow,
The fin-folk will gather and range.

It runs in the purple currents,
Swaying the idle weed;
It creeps by the walls of coral,
Where the keels of the ebb recede;

It calls in the surf above us,
In thunder of reef and key,
And where the green day filters
Through soundless furlongs of sea.

It moves where the moving sea-fans
Shadow the white sea-floor;
It stirs where the dredging sand-runs
Furrow and trench and score.

In channel and cave it finds us,
In the curve of the Windward Isles,
In the sway of the heaving currents,
In the run of the long sea-miles,

In the green Floridian shallows,
By marshes hot and rank,
And below the reach of soundings
Off the Great Bahaman Bank.

The tribes of the water people,
Scarlet and yellow and blue,
Are awake, for the old sea-magic
Is on them to rove anew.

They will ride in the great sea-rivers,
And feed in the warm land streams,
By cliffs where the gulls are nesting,
By capes where the blue berg gleams.

The fleet and shining thousands
Will follow the trackless lead
Of the bidding that rises in them,
The old ancestral need.

Will they mistrust or falter,
Question or turn or veer?
Will they put off their harness of colour,
Or their gaudy hues ungear?

Eager, unwasted, undaunted,
They go and they go. They have heard
The lift of the faint strong summons,
The lure of the watery word.

II.

THE WORD TO THE PEOPLE OF THE AIR.

Who hath uttered the wondrous hearsay,
The rumour abroad on the air,
The tribal journey summons,
The signal to flock and fare?

Who hath talked to the shy bird-people,
And counselled the feathered breast
To follow the sagging rain-wind
Over the purple crest?

O tribes of the silver whistle,
And folk of the azure wing,
Who hath revived in a night
The magic tradition of spring?

By shores of the low Gulf Islands,
Where the steaming lands emerge,
By reefs of the Dry Tortugas,
Drenched by the crumbling surge,

From the hot and drowsy shallows
Of the silent Everglades,
From creamy coral beaches
In the breath of the Northeast Trades,

We have heard, without note or warble,
Quaver or chirp or trill,
The far and soft-blown tidings
Summon from hill to hill.

Up from the blue horizon,
By canyon and ridge and plain,
Where ride in misty columns
The spearmen of the rain,

The broods of the light air-people
Will bevy and team and throng,
To fill the April valleys
With gurgle and lisp and song.

They know where the new green leafage
Spreads like the sweep of day,
Over the low Laurentians
And up through the Kootenay.

They know where the nests are waiting,
And the icy ponds are thawed,
For the stir and the sight are on them,
Moving the legions abroad.

The oriole under Monadnoc
Will cast his golden spells;
In deep Ontarian meadows
The reed-bird will loose his bells;

The thrushes will flute over Grand Pré,
The quail by the Manomet shore,
The wild drake feed in the bogan,
The swallow come back to the door.

Tanager, robin, and sparrow,
Grosbeak, warbler and wren,
The children of gladness gather
In clearing and grove and fen

For the bright primeval summer,
In their slumbering heart having heard
A strain of the great *Resurgam*,
A call of the airy word.

III.

THE WORD TO PEOPLE OF THE WOOD

Who hath uttered the leafy whisper,
The rumour that stirs the bough,
That mounts with the sap, and flushes
The buds with beauty now?

None hath report of the message,
No single authentic word;
Yet the tribes of the wood are stirring
At the tidings they have heard.

To-day will the pear-trees blossom
And the yellow jasmine vines,
Where the soft Gulf winds are surfing
In the dreamy Georgian pines.

To-morrow the peach and the redbud
Will join in the woodland pomp,
Floating their crimson banners
By smoky ridge and swamp;

And the gleaming white magnolias,
In many a city square,
Will unfold in the heavenly leisure
Of the kindly Southern air.

Next day over grey New England
The magic of spring will go,
Touching her marshes with yellow,
Her hills with a purple glow.

Then the maple buds will break
In an orange mist once more,
Through lone Canadian valleys,
From Baranov to Bras d'Or.

And where the snowdrifts vanish
From the floor of their piney home,
Hepatica and arbutus,
The shy wood-children, will come.

The elms on the meadow islands
Will shadow the rustling sedge,
The orchards reveal the glory
Of earth by dike and ledge;

The birch will unsheathe her tassels,
The willow her silver plume,
When the green hosts encamp
By lake and river and flume.

For the tides of joy are running
North with the sap and the sun,
And the tribes of the wood are arrayed
In their splendour one by one.

Not one unprepared nor reluctant,
With ardour unspent they have heard
A note of the woodland music,
A breath of the wilding word.

IV.

THE WORD TO THE PEOPLE OF THE GROUND.

Who hath uttered the faint earth-whisper,
The rumour that spreads over ground,
The sign that is hardly a signal,
The sense that is scarcely sound?

Yet listen, the earth is awake,
The magic of April is here;
The all but unobserved signal
Is answered from far and near.

Go forth in the morning and listen,
For the coming of life is good;
The lapsing of ice in the rivers,
The lisping of snow in the wood,

The murmur of streams in the mountains,
The babble of brooks in the hills,
And the sap of gladness running
To waste from a thousand stills.

Go forth in the noonday and listen;
A soft multitudinous stir
Betrays the new life that is moving
In the houses of oak and fir.

A red squirrel chirps in the balsam;
A fox barks down in the clove;
The bear comes out of his tree-bole
To sun himself, rummage and rove.

In the depth of his wilderness fastness
The beaver comes forth from his mound,
And the tiny creatures awake
From their long winter sleep under ground.

Go forth in the twilight and listen
To that music fine and thin,
When the myriad marshy pipers
Of the April night begin.

Through reed-bed and swamp and shallow
The heart of the earth grows bold,
And the spheres in their golden singing
Are answered on flutes of gold.

One by one, down in the meadow,
Or up by the river shore,
The frail green throats are unstopped,
And inflated with joy once more.

O heart, canst thou hear and hearken,
Yet never an answer bring,
When thy brothers, the frogs in the valley,
Go mad with the burden of spring?

So the old ardours of April
Revive in her creatures to-day —
The knowledge that does not falter,
The longing that will not stay,

And the love that abides. Undoubting,
In the deeps of their ken they have heard
The ancient unwritten decretal,
The lift of the buoyant word.

FROM AN OLD RITUAL.

O dwellers in the dust, arise,
My little brothers of the field,
And put the sleep out of your eyes!
Your death-doom is repealed.

Lift all your golden faces now,
You dandelions in the ground!
You quince and thorn and apple bough,
Your foreheads are unbound.

O dwellers in the frost, awake,
My little brothers of the mould!
It is the time to forth and slake
Your being as of old.

FROM AN OLD RITUAL

You frogs and newts and creatures small
In the pervading urge of spring,
Who taught you in the dreary fall
To guess so glad a thing?

From every swale your watery notes,
Piercing the rainy cedar lands,
Proclaim your tiny silver throats
Are loosened of their bands.

O dwellers in the desperate dark,
My brothers of the mortal birth,
Is there no whisper bids you mark
The Easter of the earth?

Let the great flood of spring's return
Float every fear away, and know
We are all fellows of the fern
And children of the snow.

FELLOW TRAVELLERS.

Green are the buds of the snowball,
And green are the little birds
That come to fill my branches
Full of their gentle words.

What is it, tiny brothers?
What are you trying to say
Over and over and over,
In your broken-hearted way?

Have you, too, darkling rumours
In your sweet vagrancy, —
News of a vast encounter
Of storm and night and sea?

THE FIELD BY THE SEA.

On a grey day by the sea,
I looked from the window and saw
The beautiful companies of the daisies bow
And toss in the gusty flaw.

For the wind was in from sea;
The heavy scuds ran low;
And all the makers of holiday were abashed,
Caught in the easterly blow.

My heart, too, is a field,
Peopled with shining forms,
Beautiful as the companies of the grass,
And herded by swift grey storms.

A thousand shapes of joy,
Sunlit and fair and wild, —
All the bright dreams that make the heart of a man
As the heart of a little child, —

They dance to the rune of the world,
The star-trodden ageless rune,
Glad as the wind-blown multitudes of the grass,
White as the daisies in June.

But over them, ah, what storms, —
In from the unknown sea,
The uncharted and ever-sounding desolate main
We have called Eternity!

They shudder and quake and are torn,
As the stormy moods race by.
And then in the teeth of remorse, the tempestuous lull,
Once more the hardy cry:

"Fear not, little folk of my heart,
Nor let the great hope in you fail!
Being children of light, ye are made as the
flowers of the grass,
To endure and survive and prevail."

THE DANCERS OF THE FIELD.

The wind went combing through the grass,
The tall white daisies rocked and bowed;
Such ecstasy as never was
Possessed the shining multitude.

They turned their faces to the sun,
And danced the radiant morn away;
Of all his brave eye looked upon,
His daughters of delight were they.

And when the round and yellow moon,
Like a pale petal of the dusk
Blown loose above the sea-rim shone,
They gave me no more need to ask

How immortality is named;
For I remembered like a dream
How ages since my spirit flamed
To wear their guise and dance with them.

THE BREATH OF THE REED.

I heard the rushes in the twilight,
I overheard them at the dusk of day.

Make me thy priest, O Mother,
And prophet of thy mood,
With all the forest wonder
Enraptured and imbued.

Be mine but to interpret,
Follow nor misemploy,
The doubtful books of silence,
The alphabet of joy.

A pipe beneath thy fingers,
Blown by thy lips in spring
With the old madness, urging
Shy foot and furtive wing,

A reed wherein the life-note
Is fluted clear and high,
Immortal and unmeasured, —
No more than this am I.

Delirious and plangent,
I quiver to thy breath;
Thy fingers keep the notches
From discord and from death.

Unfaltering, unflagging,
Comes the long, wild refrain,
With ardours of the April
In woodnotes of the rain.

Be mine the merest inkling
Of what the shore larks mean,
And what the gulls are crying
The wind whereon they lean.

Teach me to close the cadence
Of one brown forest bird,
Who opens so supremely,
Then falters for thy word.

One hermit thrush entrancing
The solitude with sound,—
Give me the golden gladness
Of music so profound.

So leisurely and orbic,
Serene and undismayed,
He runs the measure over,
Perfection still delayed.

No hurry nor annoyance;
Enough for him, to try
The large few notes of prelude
Which put completion by.

In ages long hereafter
His heritor may learn
What meant those pregnant pauses,
And that unfinished turn.

So one shall read thy world-runes
To find them all one day
Parts of a single motive,
Scored in an ancient way.

Till then, be mine to master
One phrase in all that strain, —
The dominance of beauty,
The transiency of pain,

As swayed by tides of dreaming,
Or bowed by gusts of thought,
A reed within the river,
I waver and am naught.

POPPIES.

I who walk among the poppies
In the burning hour of noon,
Brother to their scarlet beauty,
Feel their fervour and their swoon.

In this little wayside garden,
Under the sheer tent of blue,
The dark kindred in forgetting,
We are of one dust and dew.

They, the summer-loving gipsies,
Who frequent the Northern year;
From an older land than Egypt,
I, too, but a nomad here.

All day long the purple mountains,
Those mysterious conjurors,
Send, in silent premonition,
Their still shadows by our doors.

And we listen through the silence
For a far-off sound, which seems
Like the long reverberant echo
Of a sea-shell blown in dreams.

Is it the foreboded summons
From the fabled Towers of Sleep,
Bidding home the wandered children
From the shore of the great deep?

All day long the sun-filled valley,
Teeming with its ghostly thought,
Glad in the mere lapse of being,
Muses and is not distraught.

Then suffused with earth's contentment,
The slow patience of the sun,
As our heads are bowed to slumber
In the shadows one by one,

Sweet and passionless, the starlight
Talks to us of things to be;
And we stir a little, shaken
In the cool breath of the sea.

COMPENSATION.

Not a word from the poplar-tree here on the hill?
Not a word from the stream in the bight of the clove?
Not a word from trail, clearing, or forest, to tell
Their brother returned, how all winter they throve?

The old mountain ledges lay purple in June;
The green mountain walls arose hazy and dark;
I saw, heard, and loved all their beauty anew,
But the soul in my body lay deaf, blind, and stark.

"O, Mother Natura, whom most with full heart,
Boy, stripling, and man, I have loved, dost thou leave

Unanswered thy suppliant, troubled thy son, —
To longing no respite, to doom no reprieve ? "

Days, weeks, and months passed. Not a whisper outbroke,
Not a word to be caught, not a hint to be had,
By the soul from the world there, all leisure and sun
In perfection of summer, warm, waiting, and glad !

The rosebreasted grosbeak his triumph proclaimed ;
The veery his wildest enchantment renewed ;
And yet the old ardours not once were relit,
Nor the heart as of old with wild magic imbued.

Until on an evening unlooked for, " O Son," —
Said the stream in the clove, spoke the wind on the hill ?

Did a bird in his sleep find the lost ancient
tongue,
Universal and clear, with the shadowy thrill

Mere language has never yet uttered? — "O
Son,
Was thy heart cold with doubt, hesitation,
dismay,
Or hot with resentment, because, as it seemed,
For awhile it must journey alone and away?

"All winter the torrent must sleep under snow;
All winter ash, poplar, and beech must endure;
All winter thy rapturous brothers, the birds,
Must be silent. Are they, then, downcast or
unsure?

"Nay, I but give them their seasons and times,
Their moments of joy and their measure of
rest;

They keep the great rhythm of life's come and
go,
The unwearied repose, the unhurrying zest.

"With April I lifted them, bade longings be;
With June I have plenished their heart to the
brim.
Will they question when over the world I have
spread
The scarlet of autumn with frost at the rim?

"Behold, while vexation was filling thy days,
Thy deeper self, resting unmindful of harms,
(With who knows what dreams of the splendid
and true
To be compassed at length!) lay asleep in my
arms."

The moonlight, mysterious, stately, and blue,
Lay out on the great mountain wall, deep and still;
Far below the stream talked to itself in the clove;
The poplar-tree talked to itself on the hill.

THE SPELL.

I hung a string of verses
Against my cabin wall.
What think you was the fortune
They prayed might me befall ?

Not fame nor health nor riches
To tarry at my door,
But that my vanished sweetheart
Might visit me once more.

Out of the moted day-dream
Among the boding firs,
They prayed she might remember
The lover that was hers.

They prayed the gates of silence
A moment might unclose,
The hour before the hill-crest
Is flushed with solemn rose.

O prayers of mortal longing,
What latch can ye undo?
What comrade once departed
Ever returned for you?

All day with tranquil spirit
I kept my cabin door,
In wonder at the beauties
I had not seen before.

I slept the dreamless slumber
Of happiness again;
And when I woke, the thrushes
Were singing in the rain.

A FOREST SHRINE.

When you hear that mellow whistle
In the beeches unespied,
Footfall soft as down of thistle
Turn aside!

That's our golden hermit singer
In his leafy house and dim,
Where God's utterances linger
Yet for him.

Built out of the firmamental
Shafts of rain and beams of sun,
Norse and Greek and Oriental
Here are one.

Gothic oak and Latin laurel
Here but sentry that wild gush
Of wood-music with their aural
Calm and hush.

From those hanging airy arches
Soars the azure roof of June,
While among the feathery larches
Hangs the moon.

Through that unfrequented portal,
When the twilight winds are low,
Messengers of things immortal
Come and go;

Whispers of a rumour hidden
From slow reason, and revealed
To the child of beauty bidden
Far afield;

Hints of rapture rare and splendid
Furnished to the heart of man,
As if, where mind's journey ended,
Soul's began ;

As if, when we sighed, " No farther !
Here our knowledge pales and thins ; "
One had answered us, " Say rather,
' Here begins.' "

Argue me, " There is no gateway
In this great wall we explore,"
Till there comes a bird-note ; straight-
way,
There's the door !

Enter here, thou beauty-lover,
The domain where soul resides ;
Ingress thought could not discover,
Sense provides.

Ponder long and build at leisure,
Architect ; yet canst thou rear
Such a house for such a treasure
As is here ?

Leader of the woods and brasses,
Master of the winds and strings,
Hast thou music that surpasses
His who sings ?

You who lay cold proof's embargos
On all wonder-working, tell
Whence those fine reverberant *largos*
Sink and swell !

Hark, that note of limpid glory
Melts into the old earth-strain,
And begins the woodland story
Once again.

Hark that transport of contentment
Blown into a mellow reed,
Wild, yet tranquil — soul's preventment
Of soul's need.

There the master voluntaries
On his pipe of greenish gold;
The wise theme whereon he varies,
Never old.

What do we with those who grieve them
O'er the fevers of the mind?
Beauty's follower will leave them
Far behind.

As the wind among the rushes,
Were it not enough to know
The sure joyance of the thrushes?
Even so.

AMONG THE ASPENS.

I.

THE LOST WORD.

The word of the wind to the aspens
I listened all day to hear;
But over the hill or down in the swale
He vanished as I drew near.

I asked of the quaking shadows,
I questioned the shy green bird;
But the falling river bore away
The secret I would have heard.

Then I turned to my forest cabin
In a clove of the Kaaterskill;
And at dead of night, when the fire was low,
The whisper came to my sill.

Now I know there will haunt me ever
That word of the ancient tongue,
Whose golden meaning, half divined,
Was lost when the world was young.

I know I must seek and seek it,
Through the wide green earth and round,
Though I come in ignorance at last
To the place of the Grassy Mound.

Yet it may be I shall find it,
If I keep the patience mild,
The pliant faith, the eager mind,
And the heart of a little child.

II.

LEAF TO LEAF.

You know how aspens whisper
Without a breath of air!
I overheard one lisper
Yesterday declare,

"When all the woods are sappy
And the sweet winds arrive,
My dancing leaves are happy
Just to be alive."

And presently another,
With that laconic stir
We take to be each other,
Spoke and answered her,

"When the great frosts shall splinter
Our brothers oak and pine,
In the long night of winter
Glad fortitude be thine!"

And where the quiet river
Runs by the quiet hill,
I heard the aspens shiver,
Though all the air was still.

III.

THE PASSER BY.

Said Aspen Heart to Quaking Leaf,
"Who goes by on the hill,
That you should tremble at dead of noon
When the whole earth is still?"

Said Quaking Leaf to Aspen Heart,
"A loneliness drew nigh,
And fear was on us, when we heard
The mountain rain go by."

Said Aspen Heart to Quaking Leaf,
"Who went by on the hill?
The rain was but your old grey nurse
Crossing the granite sill."

Said Quaking Leaf to Aspen Heart,
"There was a ghostly sigh,
And frosty hands were laid on us,
As the lone fog went by."

Said Aspen Heart to Quaking Leaf,
"But who went by on the hill?
The white fogs were your playfellows,
And your companions still."

Said Quaking Leaf to Aspen Heart,
"We shook, I know not why,
Huddled together when we saw
A passing soul go by."

IV.

THE QUESTION.

I wondered who
Kept pace with me, as I wandered through
The mountain gorges blue.

I said to the aspen leaves,
The timorous garrulous tribe of the forest folk,
"Who people the wilderness,
When the wind is away,
And sparrow and jay
Keep silence of noon on a summer day?"

And the leaves replied,
"You must question our brother the rain of the
mountain-side."

Then I said to the rain,
The fleeing silvery multitudes of the rain,
"Who people the wilderness,
When the noon is still,
And valley and hill
Feel their pulses slow to the summer's will?"
And the rain replied,
"You must ask our brother the fog on the
outward tide."

Then I said to the fog,
The ancient taciturn companies of the sea-mist,
"Who people the loneliness
When your hordes emerge

On the grey sea verge,
And the wind begins his wailing dirge?"
And the fog replied,
"Inquire of that inquisitor at your side."

Then I asked myself. But he knew,
If report of sense be true,
No more than you.

V.

A SENTRY.

All summer my companion
Was a white aspen-tree,
Far up the sheer blue canyon,
A glad door-ward for me.

There at the cabin entry,
Where beauty went and came,
Abode that quiet sentry,
Who knew the winds by name.

And when to that lone portal,
All the clear starlight through,
Came news of things immortal
No mortal ever knew,

That vigilant unweary
Kept solitary post,
And heard the woodpipes eery
Of a fantastic host,

Play down the wind in sadness,
Play up the wind in glee, —
The ancient lyric madness,
The joy that is to be.

They passed; the music ended;
And through those rustling leaves
The morning sun descended,
With peace about my eaves.

THE GREEN DANCERS.

When the Green Dance of summer
Goes up the mountain clove,
There is another dancer
Who follows it for love.

To the sound of falling water,
Processional and slow
The children of the forest
With waving branches go;

And to the wilding music
Of winds that loiter by,
By trail, ravine and stream-bed,
Troop up against the sky.

The bending yellow birches,
The beeches cool and tall,
Slim ash and flowering locust,
My gipsy knows them all.

And light of foot she follows,
And light of heart gives heed,
Where in the blue-green chasm
The wraiths of mist are freed.

For when the young winged maples
Hang out their rosy pods,
She knows it is a message
From the primeval gods.

When tanager and cherry
Show scarlet in the sun,
She slips her careworn habit
To put their gladness on.

And where the chestnuts flower
Along the mountain-side,
She, too, assumes the vesture
And beauty of their pride.

She hears the freshening music
That ushers in their day,
When from the hemlock shadows
The silver thrushes play.

When the blue moth at noonday
Lies breathing with his wings,
She knows what piercing woodnote
Across the silence rings.

And when the winds of twilight
Flute up the ides of June,
Where Kaaterskill goes plainward
Under a virgin moon,

My wild mysterious spirit
For joy cannot be still,
But with the woodland dancers
Must worship as they will.

From rocky ledge to summit
Where lead the dark-tressed firs,
Under the open starshine
Their festival is hers.

She sees the moonlit laurel
Spread through the misty gloom
(The soul of the wild forest
Veiled in a mesh of bloom).

Then to the lulling murmur
Of leaves she, too, will rest,
Curtained by northern streamers
Upon some dark hill-crest.

And still, in glad procession
And solemn bright array,
A dance of gold-green shadows
About her sleep will play;

Her signal from the frontier,
There is no bar nor toll
Nor dearth of joy forever
To stay the gipsy soul.

THE WIND AT THE DOOR.

Often to my open door
Comes a twilight visitor.

When the mountain summer day
From our valley takes his way,

And the journeying shadows stride
Over the green mountain-side,

Down the clove among the trees
Moves the ghostly wandering breeze.

With the first stars on the crest
And the pale light in the west,

He comes up the dark ravine
Where no traveller is seen.

Yet his coming makes a stir
In the house of Ash and Fir:

"Master, is't in our abode
You will tarry on the road?"

"Nay, I like your roof-tree well,
But with you I may not dwell."

Birches whisper at their sill,
As he passes up the hill:

"Stranger, underneath our boughs
There is ample room to house."

"Friends, I have another quest
Than your cool abiding rest."

And the fluttering Aspen knows
Whose step by her doorway goes:

"Honour, Lord, thy silver tree
And the chamber laid for thee."

"Nay, I must be faring on,
For to-night I seek my own.

"Breath of the red dust is he
And a wayfarer like me;

"Here a moment and then lost
On a trail confused and crossed.

"And I gently would surprise
Recognition in his eyes;

"Touch his hand and talk with him
When the forest light is dim,

"Taking counsel with the lord
Of the utterable word."

Hark, did you hear some one try
The west window furtively,

And then move among the leaves
In the shadow of the eaves?

The reed curtain at the door
Rustled; there's my visitor

Who comes searching for his kin.
"Enter, brother; I'm within."

AT THE YELLOW OF THE LEAF.

The falling leaf is at the door;
The autumn wind is on the hill;
Footsteps I have heard before
Loiter at my cabin sill.

Full of crimson and of gold
Is the morning in the leaves;
And a stillness pure and cold
Hangs about the frosty eaves.

The mysterious autumn haze
Steals across the blue ravine,
Like an Indian ghost that strays
Through his olden lost demesne.

Now the goldenrod invades
Every clearing in the hills;
The dry glow of August fades,
And the lonely cricket shrills.

Yes, by every trace and sign
The good roving days are here.
Mountain peak and river line
Float the scarlet of the year.

Lovelier than ever now
Is the world I love so well.
Running water, waving bough,
And the bright wind's magic spell

Rouse the taint of migrant blood
With the fever of the road, —
Impulse older than the flood
Lurking in its last abode.

Did I once pursue your way,
Little brothers of the air,
Following the vernal ray?
Did I learn my roving there?

Was it on your long spring rides,
Little brothers of the sea,
In the dim and peopled tides,
That I learned this vagrancy?

Now the yellow of the leaf
Bids away by hill and plain,
I shall say good-bye to grief,
Wayfellow with joy again.

The glamour of the open door
Is on me, and I would be gone, —
Speak with truth or speak no more,
House with beauty or with none.

Great and splendid, near and far,
Lies the province of desire;
Love the only silver star
Its discoverers require.

I shall lack nor tent nor food,
Nor companion in the way,
For the kindly solitude
Will provide for me to-day.

Few enough have been my needs;
Fewer now they are to be;
Where the faintest follow leads,
There is heart's content for me.

Leave the bread upon the board;
Leave the book beside the chair;
With the murmur of the ford,
Light of spirit I shall fare.

Leave the latch-string in the door,
And the pile of logs to burn;
Others may be here before
I have leisure to return.

THE SILENT WAYFELLOW

To-day when the birches are yellow,
And red is the wayfaring tree,
Sit down in the sun, my soul,
And talk of yourself to me!

Here where the old blue rocks
Bask in the forest shine,
Dappled with shade and lost
In their reverie divine.

How goodly and sage they are!
Priests of the taciturn smile
Rebuking our babble and haste,
Yet loving us all the while.

In the asters the wild gold bees
Make a warm busy drone,
Where our Mother at Autumn's door
Sits warming her through to the bone.

The filmy gossamer threads
Are hung from the black fir bough,
Changing from purple to green —
The half-shut eye knows how.

What is your afterthought
When a red leaf rustles down,
Or the chickadees from the hush
Challenge a brief renown?

When silence falls again
Asleep on hillside and crest,
Resuming her ancient mood,
Do you still say, "Life is best?"

Was this reticence of yours
By the terms of being imposed?
One would say that you dwelt
With shutters always closed.

We have been friends so long,
And yet not a single word
Of yourself, your kith or kin
Or home, have I ever heard.

Nightly we sup and part,
Daily you come to my door;
Strange we should be such mates,
Yet never have talked before.

A cousin to downy-feather,
And brother to shining-fin,
Am I, of the breed of earth,
And yet of an alien kin,

Made from the dust of the road
And a measure of silver rain,
To follow you brave and glad,
Unmindful of plaudit or pain.

Dear to the mighty heart,
Born of her finest mood,
Great with the impulse of joy,
With the rapture of life imbued,

Radiant moments are yours,
Glimmerings over the verge
Of a country where one day
Our forest trail shall emerge.

When the road winds under a ledge,
You keep the trudging pace,
Till it mounts a shoulder of hill
To the open sun and space.

Ah, then you dance and go,
Illumined spirit again,
Child of the foreign tongue
And the dark wilding strain!

In these October days
Have you glimpses hid from me
Of old-time splendid state
In a kingdom by the sea?

Is it for that you smile,
Indifferent to fate and fame,
Enduring this nomad life
Contented without a name?

Through the long winter dark,
When slumber is at my sill,
Will you leave me dreamfast there,
For your journey over the hill?

To-night when the forest trees
Gleam in the frosty air,
And over the roofs of men
Stillness is everywhere,

By the cold hunter's moon
What trail will you take alone,
Through the white realms of sleep
To your native land unknown?

Here while the birches are yellow,
And red is the wayfaring tree,
Sit down in the sun, my soul,
And talk of yourself to me.

PICTOR IGNOTUS.

He is a silent second self
Who travels with me in the road;
I share his lean-to in the hills,
He shares my modest town abode.

Under the roof-tree of the world
We keep the gipsy calendar,
As the revolving seasons rise
Above the tree-tops, star by star.

We watch the arctic days burn down
Upon the hearthstone of the sun,
And on the frozen river floors
The whispering snows awake and run.

Then in the still, portentous cold
Of a blue twilight, deep and large,
We see the northern bonfires lit
Along the world's abysmal marge.

He watches, with a love untired,
The white sea-combers race to shore
Below the mossers' purple huts,
When April goes from door to door.

He haunts the mountain trails that wind
To sudden outlooks from grey crags,
When marches up the blue ravine
September with her crimson flags.

The wonder of an ancient awe
Takes hold upon him when he sees
In the cold autumn dusk arise
Orion and the Pleiades;

Or when along the southern rim
Of the mysterious summer night
He marks, above the sleeping world,
Antares with his scarlet light.

The creamy shadow-fretted streets
Of some small Caribbean town,
Where through the soft wash of the trades
The brassy tropic moon looks down;

The palm-trees whispering to the blue
That surfs along the coral key;
The brilliant shining droves that fleet
Through the bright gardens of the sea.

The crimson-boled Floridian pines
Glaring in sunset, where they stand
Lifting their sparse, monotonous lines
Out of the pink and purple sand;

The racing Fundy tides that brim
The level dikes; the orchards there;
And the slow cattle moving through
That marvellous Acadian air;

The city of the flowery squares,
With the Potomac by her door;
The monument that takes the light
Of evening by the river shore;

The city of the Gothic arch,
That overlooks a wide green plain
From her grey churches, and beholds
The silver ribbon of the Seine;

The Indian in his birch canoe,
The flower-seller in Cheapside;
Wherever in the wide round world
The Likeness and the Word abide;

He scans and loves the human book,
With that reserved and tranquil eye
That watched among the autumn hills
The golden leisured pomp go by.

What wonder, since with lavish hand
Kind earth has given him her all
Of love and beauty, he should be
A smiling, thriftless prodigal!

EPHEMERON.

Ah, brother, it is bitter cold in here
This time of year!
December is a sorry month indeed
For your frail August breed.

I find you numb this morning on the pane,
Searching in vain
A little warmth to thaw those airy vans,
Arrested in their plans.

I breathe on you; and lo, with lurking might
Those members slight
Revive and stir; the little human breath
Dissolves their frosty death.

You trim those quick antennæ as of old,
Forget the cold,
And spread those stiffened sails once more to
dare
The elemental air.

Does that thin deep, unmarinered and blue,
Come back to you,
Dreaming of ports whose bearing you have lost,
Where cruised no pirate frost?

Ah, shipmate, there'll be two of us some night,
In ghostly plight,
In cheerless latitudes beyond renown,
When the long frost shuts down.

What if that day, in unexpected guise,
Strong, kind, and wise,
Above me should the great Befriender bow,
As I above you now, —

Reset the ruined time-lock of the heart,
And bid it start,
And every frost-bound joint and valve restore
To supple play once more!

THE HERETIC.

One day as I sat and suffered
A long discourse upon sin,
At the door of my heart I listened,
And heard this speech within.

One whisper of the Holy Ghost
Outweighs for me a thousand tomes;
And I must heed that private word,
Not Plato's, Swedenborg's, nor Rome's.

The voice of beauty and of power
Which came to the beloved John,
In age upon his lonely isle,
That voice I will obey, or none.

Let not tradition fill my ears
With prate of evil and of good,
Nor superstition cloak my sight
Of beauty with a bigot's hood.

Give me the freedom of the earth,
The leisure of the light and air,
That this enduring soul some part
Of their serenity may share!

The word that lifts the purple shaft
Of crocus and of hyacinth
Is more to me than platitudes
Rethundering from groin and plinth.

And at the first clear, careless strain
Poured from a woodbird's silver throat,
I have forgotten all the lore
The preacher bade me get by rote.

Beyond the shadow of the porch
I hear the wind among the trees,
The river babbling in the clove,
And that great sound that is the sea's.

Let me have brook and flower and bird
For counsellors, that I may learn
The very accent of their tongue,
And its least syllable discern.

For I, my brother, so would live
That I may keep the elder law
Of beauty and of certitude,
Of daring love and blameless awe.

Be others worthy to receive
The naked messages of God;
I am content to find their trace
Among the people of the sod.

The gold-voiced dwellers of the wood
Flute up the morning as I pass;
And in the dusk I lay me down
With star-eyed children of the grass.

I harken for the winds of spring,
And haunt the marge of swamp and stream,
Till in the April night I hear
The revelation of the dream.

I listen when the orioles
Come up the earth with early June,
And the old apple-orchards spread
Their odorous glories to the moon.

So I would keep my natural days,
By sunlit sea, by moonlit hill,
With the dark beauty of the earth
Enchanted and enraptured still.

AFTER SCHOOL.

When all my lessons have been learned,
And the last year at school is done,
I shall put up my books and games;
"Good-by, my fellows, every one!"

The dusty road will not seem long,
Nor twilight lonely, nor forlorn
The everlasting whippoorwills
That lead me back where I was born.

And there beside the open door,
In a large country dim and cool,
Her waiting smile shall hear at last,
"Mother, I am come home from school."


PIPES OF PAN
SONGS
OF THE
SEA CHILDREN

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TO

James Whitcomb Riley

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PRELUDE.

These are the little songs
The wild sea children sang,
When the first gold arch of light
From rim to zenith sprang;

When all the glad clean joys
Of being came to birth,
Out of the darkling womb
Of the morning of the earth.

And these are the lyric songs
The earthborn children sing,
When wild-wood laughter throngs
The shy bird-throats of spring;

When there's not a joy of the heart
But flies like a flag unfurled,
And the swelling buds bring back
The April of the world.

These are the April songs
The vernal children sing,
When the yellow pollen dust
Floats on the stream in spring;

When the swelling streams go down
Through the deep and grassy floors,
And the gold-fish and the turtle
Bask at their river doors.

And these are the innocent songs
The forest children sing,
When the whippoorwill's unrest
Is a pulse in the heart of spring;

When the dark of the frail new moon
Is a globe of dim sea green,
And no soul fears what its strange
Sea-memories may mean.

These are the happy songs
The first sea children made,
When the red morning roused them
In the deep forest shade;

When Hillborn said to Seaborn,
"Sweetheart, but thou art fair!"
And the shining silver sea-mist
Made moonstones in her hair.

These are the lilting songs
The dark sea children knew,
When the sands emerged, and the sea
Was a lotus of Indian blue;

When, blossom by wind-blown blossom,
Their virginal zones undone,
The world was a wide sunflower
Turning her face to the sun.

SONGS OF THE SEA CHILDREN.

I.

There is a wise Magician,
Who sets a yellow star
To seal the cinders of the night
Within a hollow jar.

And when the jar is broken,
A marvel has been done;
There lies within the rosy dusk
That coal we call the sun.

But more than any wonder
That makes the rose of dawn,
Is this inheritance of joy
My heart is happy on.

II.

The day is lost without thee,
The night has not a star.
Thy going is an empty room
Whose door is left ajar.

Depart: it is the footfall
Of twilight on the hills.
Return: and every rood of ground
Breaks into daffodils.

Thy coming is companioned
By presences of bliss;
The rivers and the little leaves
All know how good it is.

III.

Thou art the sense and semblance
Of things that never were,
The meaning of a sunset,
The tenor of a star.

Thou art the trend of morning,
The burden of June's prime,
The twilight's consolation,
The innocence of time.

Thou art the phrase for gladness
God coined when he was young,
The fare-thee-well to sadness
By stars of morning sung,

The lyric revelation
To rally and rebuoy
The darker earth's half sinking
Temerity of joy.

Out of the hush and hearkening
Of the reverberant sea,
Some happier golden April
Might fashion things like thee.

Or if one heart-beat faltered
In oblivion's drum-roll,
That perfect idle moment
Might be thy joyous soul.

And the long waves of sorrow
Will search and find no shore
In all the seas of being,
When thou shalt be no more.

IV.

Thou art the pride and passion
Of the garden where God said,
" Let us make a man." To fashion
The beauty of thy head,

The iron æons waited
And died along the hill,
Nor saw the uncreated
Dream of the urging will.

A thousand summers wandered
Alone beside the sea,
And guessed not, though they pondered,
What his design might be.

But here in the sun's last hour,
(So fair and dear thou art!)
He shuts in my hand his flower,
His secret in my heart.

V.

In the door of the house of life,
Beside the fabled sea,
I am a harpstring in the wind,
Æolian for thee.

It was a cunning idler
Who strung the even cords
Across the drift of harmonies
Impossible to words.

It was the old Musician,
With nothing else to do,
One April when he felt the stir
Revive him and renew,

Made me thy naught but lover,
A frayed imperfect strand
Reverberant to every note,
Alive beneath thy hand!

But smile, and I am laughter;
Look sorrow, and I mourn —
A spirit from the cave of fears,
Fantastic and forlorn.

Sing low — the world is waiting
Such radiance as thine
To welcome her returning ships
Above the dark sea-line.

Rejoice — I know the cadence,
Thou innocent and glad,
To make of every hillside flower
A dancing Oread.

A thing of sense and spirit,
And moods and melody,
I am a harpstring in the wind,
Æolian for thee.

VI.

Love, by that loosened hair,
Well now I know
Where the lost Lilith went
So long ago.

Love, by those starry eyes
I understand
How the sea maidens lure
Mortals from land.

Love, by that welling laugh
Joy claims its own
Sea-born and wind-wayward
Child of the sun.

VII.

Once more in every tree-top
I hear the hollow wind
A-blowing the last remnants
Of winter from the land.

Far down the April morning,
With battle-clang and glee,
The Boreal intruders
Are driven to the sea.

Then softly, buds of scarlet,
Warm rain, and purple wing —
The tattered glad uncumbered
Camp-followers of spring!

VIII.

Under the greening willow
Wanders a golden cry;
Oriole April up in the world
With morning day goes by.

Out of the virgin quiet
Like an awakening sigh,
With the wild, wild heart forever
A journeyer am I.

We are the wind's own brothers,
Sorrow and joy and I;
But thou art the hope of morrows
That shall be by and by.

IX.

Dear, what hast thou to do
With the cold moon,
Free to range, fleet to change,
So far and soon?

Dear, what hast thou to do
With the hoar sea?
Love alone is his own
Eternity.

Dear, what hast thou to do
With anything
In the wide world beside
Joyance and spring?

X.

As sudden winds that freak
The fresh face of the sea,
The tinge upon her cheek
Tells what the storm will be.

As purple shadows rise
Up to the setting sun,
Her wonderful grey eyes
Will tell when love is done.

XI.

As down the purple of the night
I watch the flaring meteors race,
The gorgeous Bedouins of the dusk
Making across the glooms of space,

To my fantastic heart's unrest
That would be gay, that would be gone,
They seem like trysting lovers' souls
Too long delayed and hurrying on.

XII.

In the Kingdom of Boötes,
Whose vast cordon none can tell,
Mirac answers to Arcturus,
"All is well!"

What to them are days and seasons,
Storm and triumph, plague and war —
With their large, serene appointments,
Star for star?

In this handbreadth of the midnight,
These heart-confines where we dwell,
I can hear your spirit answer,
"All is well!"

What to us is night or morrow,
Or the little pause of death,
In the rhythm of joy we measure
Breath by breath?

XIII.

Look, love, along the low hills
The first stars!
God's hand is lighting the watchfires for us,
To last until dawn.

Hark, love, the wild whippoorwills!
Those weird bars,
Full of dark passion, will pierce the dim forest,
All night, on and on,

Till the overbrimmed bowl of life spills,
And time mars
The one perfect piece of his handcraft, love's lifetime
From dewrise till dawn.

Foolish heart, fearful of ills!
Shall the stars
Require a reason, the birds ask a morrow?
Heed thou love alone!

XIV.

The rain-wind from the East,
So long a wanderer
Beyond the sources of the sun,
Brings back the crocus April and the showers.
A heart upwelling in the forest flowers
Has made them lovers every one.
Who makes the twilight seem to stir
In happy tears released?
There, there, sweetheart!

The night-wind from the West,
The broad eaves of the sky,
Brings back across the orchard hills
The memories of a thousand springs with him;

And the white apple valleys in a dream
Listen to the dark whippoorwills.
Is the old burden of their joy
So great they cannot rest?
There, there, sweetheart!

XV.

O purple-black are the wet quince boughs,
Where the buds begin to burn!
And fair enough is Spring's new house,
Made fresh for Love's return.

She has taken him in and locked the door,
And thrown away the key.
When Free-foot finds his Rove-no-more,
What use is liberty?

XVI.

An unseen hand went over the hill,
And lit the cresset stars,
And below the summer sea was strewn
With mysterious nenuphars.

The little wind of twilight came
With the gladdest of words to me,
"The tide is full, the night is fair,
And Her window waits for thee!"

XVII.

The very sails are singing
A song not of the wind;
A fire dance is creaming
Our wake that runs behind.

In all the shining splendid
White moonflower of the sea,
There's not a runnel sleeping
For ecstasy of thee.

XVIII.

Where the blue comes down to the brine,
And the brine goes up to the blue,
It's shine, shine, shine,
The whole day through,
The whole summer day long, dear.

Till the sun like a harbour buoy,
Is riding afloat in the west,
And it's joy, joy, joy,
For the place of his rest,
The haven of No-more-fear.

Then the stars come out on the sea,
To dance on the purple floor.
Their Master has turned the key
In the silver door,
And my heart's delight draws near.

XIX.

As if the sea's eternal rote
Might cease to set remembrance wild,
The breezy hair, the lyric throat
Were given to the surf-born child.

And the great forest found a voice
For her along the brookside brown,
That bids the purple dusk rejoice,
And croons the golden daylight down.

XX.

O wind and stars, I am with you now;
And ports of day, Good-by!
When my captain Love puts out to sea,
His mariner am I.

I set my shoulder to the prow,
And launch from the pebbly shore.
The tide pulls out, and hints of time
Blow in from the cool sea floor.

My sheering sail is a swift white wing
Crowding the gloom with haste;
I scud through the large and solemn world,
And skim the wan grey waste.

O stars and wind, be with me now;
And ports of night, draw near!
No sooner the longed for seamark shines,
Than the very dark grows dear.

XXI.

All the zest of all the ages
Shimmers in my sea-bird's wing,
Flickering above the surges
Of the sea.

All the quiet of the ages
Slumbers in my sea-bird's wing,
Where it settles down the verges
Of the sea.

All the questing soul's behesting
Pent and freed in one white wing,
Joying there above the dirges
Of the sea.

Be thou, sweetheart, such a sweetheart!
All the valour of the spring
Crowds thy pulses with the urges
Of the sea;

Till this drench of joy, thou sweetheart,
Fills the spaces of the spring,
And the large fresh night emerges
From the sea.

XXII.

Eyes like the blue-green
Shine of the sea,
Where the swift shadows run,
Whose soul is free.

Shimmer of sunlight,
Shadow of gloom,
Wayward as ecstasy,
Solemn as doom.

Triumph, transplendour,
Joy through and through,
Till the soul wonders what
Sense next may do.

Hair like the blown grass
Brown on the hill,
Where the wide wandering
Wind has his will.

Spirit, the nomad,
Whither to wend,
Knows not and fears not,
To the world's end.

Seadusk or Dawnbright
Name the earth's child,
Like the wind, like the sea,
Virginal wild.

XXIII.

"Crimson bud, crimson bud,
How come you here,
Daring the upper world,
Blithe without fear?"

"Goldy plume, goldy plume,
Ages ago,
Came to my House of Dark
One through the snow."

"Crimson bud, crimson bud,
What was the word,
Down in the frozen earth,
Sleeping, you heard?"

"Goldy plume, goldy plume,
Deep in the mould,
Somebody whispered me,
'Budkin, be bold!'"

"Crimson bud, crimson bud,
What was his name —
Taught you such valour
And girt you with flame?"

"Ah, fellow wayfarer,"
Whispered the gloom,
"When they shall question, say,
Love bade me come!"

XXIV.

We wandered through the soft spring days,
And heard the flowers
Talking among themselves of joys
That were not ours.

Till April in a softening mood
Faltered a word
The pretty gossips of the wood
Had scarcely heard.

But somehow you, you caught the lilt
Of that wild speech
The tiny tribesmen found occult
Beyond their reach.

Now when the rainman walks the field,
And robin sings,
I hark to promises that hold
A thousand springs.

XXV.

You pipers in the swales,
Tune up your reedy flutes,
And blow and blow to bring me back
My little girl in spring!

Take all the world beside,
And flute it far away
For less than nought, but give me back
One sleepless night in spring.

XXVI.

To-night I hear the rainbirds
Piercing the silver gloom;
The scent of the sea-blown lilacs
Wanders across my room.

Caught in their wake I follow
The drift of memory;
Once more the summer twilight
Settles upon the sea.

I shut my eyes and see you
Under the lilacs stand,
While the soft mists of sea-rain
Are blowing in to land.

Your little hands steal upward,
Our fingers interlace;
And through the driving sea-dark
I feel your burning face.

One little hour of heaven
Lost in a single kiss;
And then we two forever
The castaways of bliss.

To-night the scent of lilacs
Comes up to me again,
And ghosts of buried summers
Walk with the lonely rain.

But ah, what rooftree shelters
To-night the dear black head?
Only the sea wind answers —
And leaves of the word unsaid.

XXVII.

Lord of the vasty tent of heaven,
Who hast to thy saints and sages given
A thousand nights with their thousand stars,
And the star of faith for a thousand years,

Grant me, only a foolish rover
All thy beautiful wide world over,
A thousand loves in a thousand days,
And one great love for a thousand years.

XXVIII.

In the cool of dawn I rose;
Life lay there from hill to hill
In the core of a blue pearl,
As it seemed, so deep and still.

Not a word the mountains said
Of the day that was to be,
As I crossed them, till you came
At the sunrise back with me.

Then we heard the whitethroat sing,
And the world was left behind.
A new paradise arose
Out of his untarnished mind.

The brown road lay through the wood,
And the forest floor was spread
For our footing with the fern,
And the cornel berries red.

There the woodland rivers sang;
Not a sorrow touched their glee,
Dancing up the yellow sun,
From the purple mountain sea.

Towns and turbulence and fame
Were as fabled things that lay
Through the gateway of the notch,
Long ago and far away.

There we loitered and went on,
Where the roadside berries grew;
Earth with all its joy once more
Was made over for us two.

And at last a meaning filled
The round morning fair and good,
Waited for a thousand years,
There was no more solitude.

XXIX.

Up from the kindled pines,
Lo, the lord Sun!
What shall his children find
When day is done?

Ere thy feet follow him
Over the sea,
Love, turn thy glorious
Eyes once to me!

High in the burning noon,
Lo, the lord Sun
Sleeps, with his hand slack,
His girdle undone.

Ere thy feet follow him
Over the hill,
Love, lace thy heart to mine,
Time has stood still.

Down by the valley-night
Sings the great sea;
Over the mountain rim
Day walks for thee.

Ere thy feet follow him
Into far lands,
Love, lift thy mouth to me
Up through thy hands!

Well do they journey
Who joy as they go;
Hear his hills whispering,
"So, it is so."

Ere thy feet follow him
Down to the shade,
Love, loose thy zone to me,
Mistress and maid!

Down to the kindling pines,
Lo, the lord Sun
Goes unreluctant
And day is done.

XXX.

The skiey shreds of rain
Are all blown loose again,
And bright among the dripping chestnut boles
Whistle the orioles.

As if wise Nature knew
The finest thing to do,
And touched her forestry, supremely done,
With these few flakes of sun.

To-night by the June sea
You are come back to me,
Through all the mellow dark from hill to hill
That gladdens and grows still;

As though wise Nature guessed
Her love joys were the best,
When down the darkling spaces of desire
She sent your song and fire.

XXXI.

On the meridian of the night
Alcar the Tester marks high June;
Arcturus knows his zenith fame;
No grass-head sleeps upon the dune.

And up from the southeastern sea,
Antares, the red summer star,
Brings back the ardours of the earth,
Like fire opals in a jar:

The frail and misty sense of things
Beyond mortality's ado,
The soft delirium of dream,
And joy pale virgins never knew.

XXXII.

Love, lift your longing face up through the rain!
In the white drench of it over the hills,
Blurring remembrance and quieting pain,
Stretch the strong hands of the sea.

Love, lift your longing face up through the rain!
In the bleak rote of it through the far hills,
Rhythmed to joy and untarnished of pain,
Calls the great heart of the sea.

XXXIII.

Swing down, great sun, swing down,
And beat at the gates of day,
To open and let thee forth!
I would not have thee stay.

Swing up, dear stars, and shine
Over the baths of the sea!
To-night, my beautiful one
Will open her arms for me.

XXXIV.

The world is a golden calyx,
A-swing in the blooth of time,
Where floret to floret ripens
And the starry blossoms rhyme.

Thou art the fair seed vessel
Waiting all day for me,
Who ache with the golden pollen
The night will spill for thee.

XXXV.

Eyes like summer after sundown,
Hands like roses after dew,
Lyric as a blown rose garden
The wind wanders through.

Swelling breasts that bud to crimson,
Hair like cobwebs after dawn,
And the rosy mouth wind-rifled
When the wind is gone.

XXXVI.

The sun is lord of a manor fair,
And the earth his garden old,
Whose dewy beds where he walks at morn
Flower by flower unfold.

When he goes at night and leaves the stars
Lit in the trees to shine,
Blossom by blossom the flowerheads sleep —
And a rosy head by mine.

XXXVII.

In God's blue garden the flowers are cold,
As you tell them over star by star,
Sirius, Algol, pale Altair,
Lone Arcturus, and Algebar.

In love's red garden the flowers are warm,
As I count them over and kiss them by,
From the sultry royal rose-red mouth
To the last carnation dusk and shy.

XXXVIII.

First by her starry gaze that falls
Aside, as if afraid to know
The stronger self who stirs and calls,
I think she came from a land of snow.

Then by her mood that melts to mine
Her body and her soul's desire,
Under the shifting forest shine,
I think she came from a land of fire.

XXXIX.

The alchemist who throws his worlds
In the round crucible of the sun,
Has laid our bodies in the forge
Of love to weld them into one.

The hypnotist who waves his hand
And the pale streamers walk the night,
A moment for our souls unbars
The lost dominions of delight.

XL.

Thy mouth is a snow apple,
Thy tongue a rosy melon core,
Thy breasts are citrons odorous of the East.
I know that nursery tale of Eden now,
Where God prepared the feast
Beneath the bow.
I ask no more.

The apple-trees have whispered
The only word I listened for
Through all the legends babbled in my ears.
I know what manner of unbitten fruit
The first man took with fears
And found so sweet.
I ask no more.

XLI.

As orchards in an apple land,
That whiten to the moon of May,
Hear the first rainbird's ecstasy
Peal from the dark hills far away;

The wintry spaces of my soul,
Snowed under by the drift of time,
Feel immortality begin
As your long kisses surge and climb.

XLII.

Noon on the marshes and noon on the hills,
And joy in the white sail that shivers and fills.

Gold are the grain lands, and gold is the sea,
And gold is my little love maid to me.

XLIII.

Berrybrown, Berrybrown, give me your hands!
Here in the bracken shade will we not well
Wring the warm summer world dry of its honey?
God made a heaven before He made hell.

Berrybrown, Berrybrown, give me your eyes;
Let their shy quivering rapture and deep
Melt as they merge in mine melting above them!
God made surrender before He made sleep.

Berrybrown, Berrybrown, give me your mouth,
Till all is done 'twixt a breath and a breath!
Naught shall undo the one joy-deed for ever,
God made desire before He made death.

XLIV.

Wait for me, Cherrychild, when the blue dusk
Falls from the silent star-spaces and fills
With utter peace the great heart of the hills,
Child, Cherrychild!

Call to me, Cherrychild, when the blue dusk
First throbs to passion among the dark hills,
In the brown throats of the lone whippoorwills,
Child, Cherrychild!

Come to me, Cherrychild, in the blue dusk!
Forlorn and loverless as the wild sea,
Long have I lain alone, longing for thee,
Child, Cherrychild.

XLV.

Summer love, open your eyes to me now!
June's on the mountain and day's at the door.
Time shall turn back for us one crimson hour,
Ere the white seraph winds walk the sea floor.

Summer heart, open your arms to me now!
Beautiful wonder-eyed spirit's home, here
With the eternal ache quenched in the bliss,
One golden minute outmeasures a year.

Sweet heaven! Open your arms to me now!
There, dearest body, cease trembling, lie still!
Joy, how the June birds are shivered with song!
And see, the first shreds of dawn over the hill.

XLVI.

Through what strange garden ran
The sultry stream whereon
This languorous nenuphar of love could grow?
Such melting ardours spending to the moon,
From swoon to swoon!

My wondrous moonflower white,
Outspread in the warm night,
Tinged with a rosy tint, a golden glow,
And fervours of enchantment it must hide
Till daylight died.

It lies so soft and fond,
Wilted in my hot hand,

That was so dewy fresh an hour ago.
" Can life be, then," my soul is pondering,
" So frail a thing? "

And all because I laid
The snowy petals wide;
Having heard tell, yet longing still to know,
What sweet things youth might barter ignorance
for,
Once and no more.

XLVII.

Let the red dawn surmise
What we shall do,
When this blue starlight dies
And all is through.

If we have loved but well
Under the sun,
Let the last morrow tell
What we have done.

XLVIII.

A breath upon my face,
A whisper at my ear,
Filling this leafy place,
Tell me love is here.

The sea-gloom of her eyes,
The apples of her breast,
The shadows where she lies,
A-tremble or at rest,

The little rosy knees,
The beech-brown of her hair —
A thousand things like these
Tell me love is fair.

The clinging of her kiss,
Her heart that looks beyond,
The joys she will not miss,
Tell me love is fond.

And when I am away,
A weary dying fall,
Haunting the wind by day,
Tells me love is all.

XLIX.

I was a reed in the stilly stream,
Heigh-ho!
And thou my fellow of moveless dream,
Heigh-lo.

Hardly a word the river said,
As there we bowed him a listless head:

Only the yellowbird pierced the noon;
And summer died to a drowsier swoon,

Till the little wind of night came by,
With the little stars in the lonely sky,

And the little leaves that only stir,
When shiest wood-fellows confer.

It shook the stars in their purple sphere,
And laid a frost on the lips of fear.

It woke our slumbering desire,
As a breath that blows a mellow fire,

And the thrill that made the forest start,
Was a little sigh from our happy heart.

This is the story of the world,
Heigh-ho!
This is the glory of the world,
Heigh-lo.

L.

I was the west wind over the garden,
Out of the twilit marge and deep;
You were the sultry languorous flower,
Famished and filled and laid to sleep.

I was the rover bee, and you —
With the hot red mouth where a soul might drown,
And the buoyant soul where a man might swim —
You were the blossom that drew me down.

LI.

A touch of your hair, and my heart was furled;
A drift of fragrance, and noon stood still;
All of a sudden the fountain there
Had something to whisper the sun on the hill.

Rose of the garden of God's desire,
Only the passionate years can prove
With sorrow and rapture and toil and tears
The right of the soul to the kingdom of love.

LII.

In the land of kisses
The very winds were stirred
To mortal speech. But this is
The only tale I heard.

In the land of kisses
Your mouth is a red bloom,
Aching to know the blisses
That perish and consume.

In the land of kisses
My mouth is a red moth
Searching in the dusk. And this is
The rapture for us both.

LIII.

I think the sun when he turns at night,
And lays his face against the sea's,
Must have such thoughts as these.

I think the wind, when he wakes at dawn,
Must wonder, seeing hill by hill,
That they can sleep so still.

LIV.

I see the golden hunter go,
With his hound star close at heel,
Through purple fallows above the hill,
When the large autumn night is still
And the tide of the world is low.

And while to their unwearied quest
The sister Pleiads pass,
That seventh loveliest and lost
Desire of all the orient host
Is here upon my breast.

LV.

You old men with frosty beards,
I am wiser than you all;
I have seen a fairer page
Than Belshazzar's wall.

You young men with scornful lips,
I am stronger than you all;
I have sown the Cadmian field
Where no shadows fall.

For a woman yesterday
Loved me, body, soul, and all.
Saints will lift their crowns to me
At the Judgment Call.

LVI.

It was the tranquil hour
Of earth's expectancy,
When we lay on the Wishing Sands
Beside the sleeping sea.

We saw the scarlet moon rise
And light the pale grey land;
We heard the whisper of the tide,
The sighing of the sand.

I felt the ardent flutter
Your heart gave for delight;
You knew how earth is glad and hushed
Under the tent of night.

We dreamed the dream of lovers,
And told our dream to none;
And all that we desired came true,
Because we wished as one.

LVII.

The mountain ways one summer
Saw joy and life go past,
When we who fared so lonely
Were hand in hand at last.

Till over us the pine woods
Their purple shadows cast,
And the tall twilight laid us
Hot mouth to mouth at last.

O hills, beneath your slumber,
Or pines, below your blast,
Make room for your two children,
Cold cheek to cheek at last!

LVIII.

Poppy, you shall live forever
With the crimson of her kiss,
Through a summer day undreamed of
In a land like this.

Once I bartered with Oblivion:
For the crimson of her kiss
I would give a thousand morrows
Of a day like this.

But I was a foolish buyer;
For the crimson of her kiss
Woke me, and I heard the wind say,
"Nevermore like this!"

Poppy, you shall sleep forever
With the crimson of her kiss
Through the centuries, undreamed of
In a rhyme like this.

LIX.

I loved you when the tide of prayer
Swept over you, and kneeling there
In the pale summer of the stars,
You laid your cheek to mine.

I loved you when the auroral fire,
Like the world's veriest desire,
Burned up, and as it touched the sea,
You laid your limbs to mine.

I loved you when you stood tiptoe
To say farewell, and let me go
Into the night from your laced arms,
And laid your mouth to mine.

And I shall love you on that day
The wind comes over the sea to say
Your golden name upon men's mouths,
And mix your dust with mine.

LX.

Once of a Northern midnight,
By dike and mountainside,
With fleeces for her habit,
The moon went forth to ride

Up from the ocean caverns,
Where ancient memories bide,
Returning with his secret
We heard the muttering tide.

But fear was not upon you;
Your woman's arms were wide;
The world's poor shreds and tatters
Of mumming laid aside.

The sea-rote for our rubic,
Our ritual and guide,
There was a virgin wedding
Whose vows no priest supplied.

And there until the dawn-wind
Up from the marshes sighed,
Whispered among the aspens,
Shivered and passed and died,

Our scene-shifter the moonlight,
Our orchestra the tide,
I was a prince of fairy,
You were a prince's bride.

LXI.

The forest leaves were all asleep,
The yellow stars were on the hill,
The roving winds were all away,
Only the tide was restless still,

When I awoke. My chamber dim
Was flooded by the cool, sweet night,
And in the hush I seemed aware
Of premonitions of delight.

Who called me lightly as I slept?
Who touched my forehead with soft hands?
Who summoned me without a sound
Back from the vague, mysterious lands?

It must have been my sleepless heart
Knocking upon his prison door,
To bid old Reason have a care
Lest Joy should pass and come no more.

LXII.

There sighed along the garden path
And through the open door a stir;
'Twas not the rustle of the corn,
Nor yet the whisper of the fir.

There passed an Eastern odour, fraught
With the delirium of sense;
'Twas not the attar of the rose,
Nor the carnation's redolence.

Then came a glimmering of white —
The drench of sheer diaphanous lawn,
More palpable than light of stars,
And more delectable than dawn.

The Paphian curve from throat to waist,
From waist to knee, then lost again,
Told me how beauty such as hers
Spreads like a madness among men.

LXIII.

And then I knew the first vague bliss
That swept through Lilith like strange fire,
Consuming all her loveliness
With one imperious desire,

When in the twilight she beheld,
Through the green apple shades obscure,
The Lord God moulding from the dust
Her splendid virgin paramour.

I knew what aching shudder ran
Through the dark bearers, file on file,
When Pharaoh's daughter went to merge
Her peerless beauty in the Nile;

What slumbering deliciousness
Awoke beside the Dorian stream
When the young prince from over sea
Broke on the lovely Spartan's dream;

And all the fervour and desire,
The raptures and the ecstasies,
Of Aucassin and Nicollette,
Of Abelard and Héloïse,

And all the passionate despair,
So bravely borne for many a year,
Of Tristram and the dark Iseult,
Of Launcelot and Guinevere!

LXIV.

I knew, by that diviner sense
Which wakes to beauty sweet and lone,
Once more beneath the moonlit boughs
Astarte had unloosed her zone;

Immortal passion, fair and wild,
Remembering her joys of yore,
Had taken on the human guise
To glad one mortal lover more.

LXV.

A moon-white moth against the moon,
A sea-blue raindrop in the sea,
A grain of pollen on the air,
This little virgin soul might be.

As if a passing breath of wind
Should stir the poplars in the night,
Her wondrous spirit woke from sleep,
And shivered with unknown delight.

As if a sudden garden door
Should open in a granite wall,
She trembled at the brink of joy,
So great and so ephemeral.

LXVI.

What is it to remember?
How white the moonlight poured into the room,
That summer long ago!
How still it was
In that great solemn midnight of the North,
A century ago!

And how I wakened trembling
At soft love-whispers warm against my cheek,
And laughed it was no dream!
Then far away,
The troubled, refluent murmur of the sea,
A sigh within a dream!

LXVII.

She had the fluttering eyelids
Like petals of a rose;
I had the wisdom never learned
From any musty prose.

She had the melting ardour
That hesitates yet dares;
And I had youthful valour's look,
That is so like despair's.

She had the tender bearing
Of daffodils in spring;
And I had sense enough to know
Love is a fleeting thing.

She had the heart of tinder;
I had the lips of flame;
And neither of us ever heard
Procrastination's name.

She had the soft demeanour,
Discreet as any nun's;
And each of us has all the joy
God gives his foolish ones.

LXVIII.

The land lies full, from brim to brim
Of the great smoke-blue mountains' rim,
Of yellow autumn and red sun.
A giant in content, the day
Idles the solemn hours away
To dreamland one by one.

Life is the dominance of good,
And love the ecstasy of mood,
Your hand in my hand says to me.
Yet, somewhere in the waste between
Being and sense, I hear a threne
Wash like the dirging sea.

LXIX.

In the blue opal of a winter noon,
When all the world was a white floor
Lit by the northern sun,
I saw with naked eyes a midday star
Burn on like gleaming spar,
Where all its fellows of the mighty dusk
Had perished one by one.

When I shall have put by the vagrant will,
And down this rover's twilight road
Emerge into the sun,
Be thou my only sheer and single star,
Known, named, and followed far,
When all these Jack-o'-lantern hopes and fears
Have perished one by one!

LXX.

Far hence in the infinite silence
How we shall learn and forget,
Know and be known, and remember
Only the name of regret?

Sown in that ample quiet,
We shall break sheath and climb,
Seeds of a single desire
In the heart of the apple of time.

We shall grow wise as the flowers,
And know what the bluebirds sing,
When the hands of the grasses unravel
The wind in the hollows of spring.

And out of the breathless summer
The aspen leaves will stir,
At your low sweet laugh to remember
The imperfect things we were.

LXXI.

Of the whole year, I think, I love
The best that time we used to call
The Little Summer of All Saints,
About the middle of the fall,

Because there fell the golden days
Of that gold year beside the sea,
When first I had you at heart's will,
And you had your whole will of me.

It is the being's afternoon,
The second summer of the soul,
When spirits find a way to reach
Beyond the sense and its control.

Then come the firmamental days,
The underseason of the year,
When God himself, being well content,
Takes time to whisper in our ear.

Sweetheart, once more by every sign
Of blade and shadow, it must be
The Little Summer of All Saints
In the red Autumn by the sea.

LXXII.

At night upon the mountains
The magic moon goes by,
And stops at every threshold
With lure and mystery.

And then my lonely fancy
Can bide content no more,
But through an autumn country
Must search from door to door,

Till in a quiet valley,
Under a quiet sky,
Is found the one companion
To bid the world good-by.

And once again at moonrise
We wander hand in hand,
With the last grief forgotten,
Through an enchanted land.

LXXIII.

Once more the woods grow crimson,
Once more the year burns down,
Once more my feet come home
To the little seaboard town.

Once more I learn desire
Prevails but to endure,
And the heart springs to meet
Your hand-touch — and be sure.

LXXIV.

Once when the winds of spring came home
From the far countries where they roam,
I heard them tell
Of things I could not understand,
And strange adventures in a land
Where all was well.

I do not wonder any more
What Autumn at his open door
Is dreaming of;
I am so happy to have done
With all the things underneath the sun
Save only love.

LXXV.

The world is swimming in the light,
Sheer as a bubble green and gold.
On the purpureal autumn walls
Once more time's rubric is unrolled.

As if the voice of the blue sea
Sufficed for summer's utmost speech,
But now the very hills must help
And lift their heart to the lyric reach.

Scarlet, diaphanous and glad,
The valiant message waves and burns,
The elemental cry that lurks
Deep as the cold heart of the Norns.

LXXVI.

When the October wind stole in
To wake me in my chamber cool,
With dancing sunlight on the wall,
From the still vestibule

Fluttered a sound like rustling leaves,
Or the just-heard departing stir
Of silk, a hint of presence gone,
A waft of lavender.

I saw upon my arms strange marks,
Traced when my eyes were unaware,
Like petal-stains of some green rose
Or faint kiss-bruises there;

And wondered, as there came the sad
Eternal whisper of the sea,
Which one of all my pale dead loves
Had spent the night with me.

LXXVII.

The red frost came with his armies
And camped by the sides of the sea.
The maples and the oaks took on
His gorgeous livery.

They dyed their tents a madder,
Alizarin and brown,
And dipped their banners in the sun
To give their joy renown.

And lo, when twilight sobered
Their dauntless cinnabars,
Along the outposts of the sea
The watch-fires of the stars!

And I for love of roving
Am listed with the king,
Because I knew the password,
"Joy is the only thing!"

LXXVIII.

Dearest, in this so golden fall,
When beauty aches with her own bliss,
One thought the pause to my desire
And my small consolation is.

I am a child. A thistle seed
On the boon wind is more than I,
Yet will the hand that sows the hills
Have care of me too when I die.

When I who love thee without words
Sink as a foam-bell in the sea,
One who has no regard for fame
Will neither have contempt for me.

LXXIX.

Her hair was crocus yellow,
Her eyes were crocus blue,
Her body was the only gate
Of paradise I knew.

Her hands were velvet raptures,
Her mouth a velvet bliss;
Not Lilith in the garden had
So wonderful a kiss.

To know her was to banish
Reason for once and all.
Her voice was like a silver door
Set in a scarlet wall.

For when she said, " I love you,"
It was as when the tide
Yearns for the naked moonlight,
An unreluctant bride.

And when she said, " Ah, leave me,"
It was as when the sea
Sighs at the ebb, or a spent wind
Dies in the aspen tree.

LXXX.

Out of the dust that bore thee,
What wonder walking came, —
What beauty like blown grasses,
What ardour like still flame!

What patience of the mountains,
What yearning of the sea,
What far eternal impulse
Endowed the world with thee?

A reed within the river,
A leaf upon the bough,
What breath of April ever
Was half so dear as thou?

LXXXI.

Remnants of this soul of mine,
This same self that once was me,
Flock and gather and grow one,
Whole once more at thought of thee.

Never yet was such a love,
So supremely fond as thou;
Never mortal lover yet
So beloved as thine is now.

I a foam-head in the sea,
Thou the tide to lift and run;
I a sombre-crested hill,
Thou the purple light thereon.

Tide may ebb and light may fail,
But not love's sincerity, —
More enduring than the sun,
More compelling than the sea.

LXXXII.

What is this House at the End of the World,
Where the sun leaves off and the snow begins,
And the drift of the grey sea spins?

O this is the house where I was born,
At the world's far edge one April day,
Within sound of the white sea spray.

The place is lone, where the hills recede,
And the sea slopes over the world's far side,
And nothing moves but the tide, —

The moaning tide and the silent sun,
The wind and the stars and the Northern light,
Changing the watch by night.

And of all the travellers who questioned me,
Why I make my home in so quiet a land,
Not a soul could understand.

Till the day you came with love in your eyes,
And asked no more than the sun on the wall,
Yet understood it all.

And my house has been filled to overflow
With beauty and laughter and peace since then,
And joys of the world of men.

LXXXIII.

A woman sat by the hearth,
And a man looked out at the door.

"O lover, I hear a sound
As of approaching storm,
When the sea makes in from the north
With thunder and chafing and might,
And trundles the quaking ground."

"It is not the sea you hear.
The ice in the river is loosed;
You hear its grinding mills
Wearing the winter away,
And the grist of grief and cold

Shall soon be the meal of joy.
O heart of me, April is here!"

"O lover, I hear a sigh
As of the boding wind
In the murmurous black pines,
Or a stir as of beating wings
When the fleeing curlews fly."

"It is not the wind's great hum;
The bees in the willow blooms,
All golden-dusted now,
Sing in their chantry loft
As when earth the immortal was young,
Busy with ardour and joy.
O heart of mine, April is come!"

"O lover, my heart aches sore;
My hands would fondle your hair,
My cheek be laid to your cheek;

A strange new wild great word
Knocks at my heart's closed door."

"Who is not a learner now?
We endure, and seasons change,
And the heart grows great and strange
With the beauty of earth and time.
Our lives unfold and get free,
As the streams and the creatures do,
To range through the April now."

Like a gold spring-flower in his arms,
She stood by the open door.

LXXXIV.

The willows are all golden now,
And grief is past and olden now;
To the wild heart
There comes a start
Will help it and embolden now.

The birch tips are all slender now;
The April light is tender now;
And the soft skies
Are calm and wise
With vision of new splendour now.

The streets are full of gladness now, —
Forget their look of sadness now;
While up and down
The flowery town
Comes back the old spring madness now.

LXXXV.

O wonder of all wonders,
The winter time is done,
And to the low, bleak, bitter hills
Comes back the melting sun!

O wonder of all wonders,
The soft spring winds return,
And in the sweeping gusts of rain
The glowing tulips burn!

O wonder of all wonders,
That tenderness divine,
Bearing a woman's name, should knock
At this poor door of mine!

LXXXVI.

This is the time of the golden bough,
The April ardour, the mystic fire,
And the soft wind up from the South,
Lingering, rainy, and warm,
Dissolving sorrow and bidding new life aspire, —
New spirit take form, —
Through the waking green earth now.

This is the time of the golden tress,
The heaving heart and the shining glance,
And the little head that bows
Meekly to love at last.
Then two behold the flowery world in a trance
Through the spring's new vast
Of sunshine and tenderness.

LXXXVII.

When spring comes up the slope of the grey old
sea,
Like a green galleon,
With joy in her wake, with light on her sails,
What will she bring to us, my Yvonne?

The long, sweet lisp and drench of the sweetness
of rain,
The strong, glad youth of the sun,
And a touch of the madness that makes men wise
With the wisdom of lovers, my Yvonne.

LXXXVIII.

Now spring comes up the world, sweetheart,
What shall we find to do?
The hills grow purple in the rain,
The sea is gold and blue;

The door is open to the sun,
The window to the sky;
The odour of the cherry bough,
A freighted dream, goes by;

The spruces tell the southwest wind
Where the white windflowers are;
The brooks are babbling in the dusk
To one great yellow star;

In all the April-coloured land,
Where glints and murmurs stray,
There's not a being that draws breath
But will go mad to-day —

Go mad with piercing ecstasy,
Afoot, afloat, awing,
And wild with all the aching sweet
Delirium of spring.

Now April fills the world with love,
There's not a thing to do
But to be happy all night long,
Then glad the whole day through.

LXXXIX.

The rain on the roof is your laughter;
The wind in the eaves is your sigh;
The sun on the hills is your gladness
In Spring going by.

The sea to its uttermost morning,
Gold-fielded, unfrontiered and blue,
Is the light and the space and the splendour
My heart holds for you.

XC.

Sweetheart, sweetheart, delay no more,
Nor in this prosy street abide!
The fairy coach is at the door;
The fairy ship is on the tide.

For I have built of golden dreams,
And furnished with delight for thee,
And lit with wondrous starry beams,
A fairy place over sea.

Then, footman, up! Good horses, speed!
Then, lads, aboard and make all sail!
The wind is fair, the cable freed;
Now what can all the world avail?

XCI.

Out of the floor of the greenish sea
Flowers the scarlet moon,
Thrusting the tip of her budding lip
Through its watery sheath in the waiting June.

Out of the grey of forgotten things
My heart shall arise at full,
And illumine space to find your face
By a love-light quiet and wonderful.

XCII.

There's not a little boat, sweetheart,
That dances on the tide, —
There's not a nodding daisy-head
In all the meadows wide, —

In all the warm green orchards,
Where bright birds sing and stray,
There's not a whistling oriole
So glad as I this day.

XCIII.

She said, "In all the purple hills,
Where dance the lilies blue,
Where all day long the springing larks
Make fairy-tales come true,

"Where you can lie for hours and watch
The unfathomable sky,
There's not a breath of all the June
That's half so glad as I!"

XCIV.

I saw the ships come wing by wing
Up from the golden south with spring;
And great was the treasure they had in hold
Of food and raiment and gems and gold,
The loot and barter of many lands
Brought home by daring and hardy hands.

For love is the only seed that sows
The waste of the sea which no man knows.

My sailing thoughts came back to me
From faring over the great dream sea;
And every one was laden deep
With riches of memory to keep,

Laughter and joy and the smooth delight
Of the little friend and the starry night.

For love is the only seed that sows
The waste of the heart which no man knows.

XCV.

Up and up, they all come up
Out of the noon together,
The flowering sails on the slope of the sea
In the white spring weather.

In and in, they all draw in —
A streaming flock together —
From the lone and monstrous waste of sea
By a single tether.

Home, come home, they all make home
In a racing fleet together —
The little white wishes I sent to you
In the golden weather.

XCVI.

I saw you in the gloaming, love,
When all the fleets were homing, love,
And under the large level moon the long grey seas were combing, love.

I saw you tall and splendid, love,
And all my griefs were ended, love,
When on me, as I put to land, your seaward eyes were bended, love.

The little boats were stranded, love,
And all their rich bales landed, love;
But all my wealth awaited me low-voiced and gentle-handed, love.

XCVII.

How unutterably lonely
Is the vast grey round of sea,
Till the yellow flower of heaven
Breaks and blossoms and gets free,
Lighting up the lilac spaces
With her golden density!
Hope of sailors and of lovers,
Swings the lantern of the sea.

Not the moon it was that lighted
One grey waste of heart I know,
Warmed with loving, touched with magic,
And made molten and aglow,
When your beauty flowered above it
From a twilight soft and slow.
Dearest face that still must beacon
Where your lover still must go!

XCVIII.

Do you know the pull of the wind on the sea?
That is the thought of you over my heart,
The long soft breath of the soul drawing back
to me,
From the desolate lone of outer space,
At dead of night when we are apart.

Do you know the sound of the surf on the shore,
At the lilac close of a soft spring day?
That is the fairy music I hear once more,
As I remember your last farewell,
In the blue still night when you are away.

And the wondrous round of the moon on the hill,
When blue dusk covers the rim of the sea?

More desired and strange and loved and lovelier
still
Is the vision that comes with love in her eyes —
Your wonderful eyes — forever to me.

XCIX.

The fishers are sailing; the fleet is away;
The rowlocks are throbbing at break of day.

The cables are creaking; the sails are unfurled;
The red sun is over the rim of the world.

The first summer hour is white on the hill;
The sails in the harbour-mouth belly and fill, —

Each boat putting out with the breast of a gull
For the mighty great deep that shall rock them
and lull.

There, there, they all pass out of sight one by
one, —
Gleam, dazzle, and sink in the path of the sun, —

The last tiny speck to melt out and be free
As a roseleaf of cloud on the rim of the sea.

C.

My love said, "What is the sea?"
I said, "The unmeasured sea
Is my heart, sweetheart,
That is stormy or still
With its great wild will,
Glorying, stainless and free,
Or sad with a sorrow beyond man's speech to
impart,
But for ever calling to thee,
Heart of my heart."

My love said, "What is the tide?"
I said, "The unshackled tide
Is my love, sweetheart,
The draft and sweep

Of the restless deep,
Made clean as the stars and wide,
That forever must yearn to the land above and apart,
Till the day when she sinks to his side,
Heart of my heart."

My love said, "What is the land?"
I said, "The Summer land
Is thy face, sweetheart,
Dreamy and warm and glad,
In a benediction clad,
With sunshine sweetened and tanned;
And there is the set of the tide, the end and the start,
The sea's despair and demand,
Heart of my heart!"

CI.

The moonlight is a garden
Upon the mountainside,
Wherein your gleaming spirit
All lovely and grave-eyed,

Touched with the happy craving
That will not be denied,
Aforetime used to wander
Until it reached my side.

O wild white forest flower,
Rose-love and lily-pride,
And staunch of burning beauty
Against your lover's side!

CII.

The lily said to the rose,
"What will become of our pride,
When Yvonne comes down the path?"
And the crimson rose replied,

"Our beauty and pride must wane,
Yet we shall endure to stir
The pulse of lovers unborn
With metaphors of her."

CIII.

The white water-lilies, they sleep on the lake,
Till over the mountain the sun bids them wake.

At the rose-tinted touch of the long, level ray,
Each pure, perfect blossom unfolds to the day.

Each affluent petal outstretched and uncurled
To the glory and gladness and shine of the world.

O whiter land-lily, asleep in the dawn,
While yet the cool curtain of stars is half drawn,

And all the dark forest is mystic and still,
With the great yellow planet aglow on the hill,

Hark, somewhere among the grey beeches a
thrush
Sends the first thrill of sound to requicken the
hush!

With a flutter of eyelids, a sigh soft and deep,
An unfolding of rosy warm fingers from sleep,

For one perfect day more to love, gladden and
roam,
Thy spirit comes back to its flowerlike home.

CIV.

What are the great stars white and blue,
Sparkling along the twilight there?
They are the dewy gems let fall,
When I loosed your hair.

What is the great pale, languorous moon
On the floor of the sea alone?
That is the yellow rose let fall,
When I loosed your zone.

CV.

What is that spreading light far over the sea,
In the thin cool dawn, in the wash of the summer air,
When the planets pale
And the soft winds fail,
But Yvonne with her yellow hair?

What is that deep, dark shine in the heart of the sea,
The glory and glow and darkle and dim surprise,
Melting and clear
Beyond fathom of fear,
But Yvonne with her smoke-blue eyes?

What is that burning disk on the rim of the sea,
When autumn brushfires smoulder and birds go
South,
When twilight fills
The imperial hills,
But Yvonne with her scarlet mouth?

CVI.

Over the sea is a scarlet cloud,
And over the cloud the sun.
And over my heart is a shining hope,
And over that, Yvonne.

CVII.

What lies across my lonely bed
Like tropic moonlight soft and pale?
What deeper gold is that outspread
Across my pillow like a veil?

What sudden fragrances are these
That voyage across the gloom to me,
With faint delirious ecstasies
From fairy gardens over sea?

What rustles in the curtained dusk
With the remembrance of a sigh,
As if a breath of wandering air
Should stir the poppies going by?

Lover of beauty, can it be
That from some far off foreign clime
The sumptuous night has brought to thee
The Rose of Beauty of all time?

CVIII.

Another day comes up,
Wears over, and goes down;
And it seems an age has passed
In a little seaboard town,

To one who must weary and wait
Till the sun comes round once more,
Before he may tap on the pane
And lift the latch of your door.

CIX.

Three things there be in the world, Yvonne;
And what do you guess they mean?
The stable land, the heaving sea,
And the tide that hangs between.

Three things there be in this life, Yvonne;
And what do you guess they mean?
Your sun-warm soul, my wind-swept soul,
And the current that draws between.

CX.

The first soft green of a Northern spring,
Lit by a golden sun:
That is the little frock you wore
When our love was begun,
In the house by the purple shore.

The gold-red flush of early fall,
And the tinge of sun on the sea:
That is the maiden vest you wore
When you came to my knee,
And the firelight danced on the floor.

CXI.

Now all the twigs and grasses
Are feathery with snow;
The land is white and level,
The brooks have ceased to flow.

No song is in the woodland,
There is no light of sun,
But bright and warm and tender
Is my sweetheart, Yvonne.

The lower hills are purple,
The farther peaks are lost;
There's nothing left alive now,
Except the bitter frost.

Yes, two there be that heed not
How cold the year may run:
The fire upon the hearthstone,
And my sweetheart, Yvonne.

CXII.

Our isle is a magic ship;
You can feel it swing and dip,
Running the long blue slopes
Of sliding sea,
With you and me
The only adventurers.

The sails of the snow are spread.
See how we forge ahead!
Good-by, old summers and sorrows!
O brave and dear
Whom never a fear
Of the breathless voyage deters!

CXIII.

The sails of the ship are white, love;
What are they?
The hauling clouds, you say.

The ropes are weather-worn, love;
What are they?
The strands of rain, you say.

The lights ashore are lit, love;
What are they?
The beacon stars, you say.

How shall we keep the course, love,
By night and day?
By a secret chart, you say.

But how shall we reckon true, love,
Without time of day?
By a tick of the heart, you say.

And how shall we know the land, love,
On that day?
You smile and will not say.

CXIV.

Look, where the northern streamers wave and
fold,
Bluish and green and gold,

At the far corner of the quiet land,
Moved by an unseen hand!

Some one has drawn the curtains of the night,
And taken away the light.

It is so still I cannot hear a sound,
Except the mighty bound

Your little heart makes beating in your side,
And the first sob of tide,

When the sea turns from ebb far down the shore
To his old task once more.

O surging, stifling heart, have all your will,
In the blue night and still!

Love till the Hand folds up the firmament,
And the last stars are spent!

CXV.

I do not long for fame,
Nor triumph, nor trumpets of praise;
I only wish my name
To endure in the coming days,

When men say, musing at times,
With smiling speech and slow,
"He was a maker of rhymes
Yvonne loved long ago!"

CXVI.

I know how the great and golden sun
Will come up out of the sea,
Stride in to shore
And up to her door,
To touch her hand and her hair,
With so much more than a man can say,
Bidding Yvonne good day.

I know how the great and quiet moon
Will come up out of the sea,
And climb the hill
To her window-sill
And enter all silently,
And lie on her little cot so white,
Kissing Yvonne good night.

I know how the great and countless stars
Will come up out of the sea,
To keep their guard
By her still dooryard,
Lest the soul of Yvonne should stray
And be lost for ever there by the deep,
In the wonderful hills of sleep.

CXVII.

What will the Angel of the Morning say,
Relieving guard?
"Night, who hath passed thy way
To the Palace Yard?"
And Night will make reply,
"Only two springtime lovers sought
The King's reward."

Then will the Angel of the Morning say,
"What said the King?"
"The King said nought, but smiled
And took his ring
And gave it to the man,
And set him in his stead for one
Sweet day of spring."

Then will the Angel of the Morning say,
With grave regard,
"Pass, Night, and leave the gate
For once unbarred.
I serve the lover now;
He shall be free of all the earth
For his reward."

CXVIII.

Along the faint horizon
I watch the first soft green,
And for the first wild warble
Near to the ground I lean.

The flowers come up with colour,
The birds come back with song,
And from the earth are taken
Despondency and wrong.

Yet in the purple shadows,
And in the warm grey rain,
What hints of ancient sorrow
And unremembered pain!

O sob and flush of April,
That still must joy and sing!
What is the sad, wild meaning
Under the heart of Spring?

CXIX.

Once more the golden April;
Gold are the willow-trees,
And golden the soft murmur
Of the gold-belted bees.

All golden is the sunshine,
And golden are the flowers,
The golden-wing makes music
In the long, golden hours.

All dull gold are the marshes
And red gold are the dunes,
And gold the pollen dust is
Moting the quiet noons.

Even the sea's great sapphire
Is panelled with raw gold.
How else were spring unperished,
A thousand ages old?

CXX.

Now comes the golden sunlight
Up the glad earth once more,
And every forest dweller
Comes to his open door.

And now the quiet rain-wind
Comes from the soft grey sea,
To haunt thy April lover
With lonely pangs for thee!

CXXI.

In the blue mystery of the April woods,
Thy spirit now
Makes musical the rainbird's interludes,
And pink the peach-tree bough.

In the new birth of all things bright and fair,
'Tis only thou
Art very April, glory, light and air,
And joy and ardour now!

AFTERSONG.

These are the joyous songs
The shy sea children sing,
When the moon goes down the west,
Soft as a pale moth wing;

When the gnat and the bumblebee
In the gauze of sleep are fast,
And a fairy summer dream
Is the only thing will last.

These are the ever-songs
The heart of the sea will sing,
When ash-coloured birds are building,
And lilac thickets ring;

When June is an open road
For every soul that stirs;
When scarlet voices summon,
And not a foot defers.

These are the twilight songs
Out of the simple North,
Where the marchers of the night
In silent troops go forth;

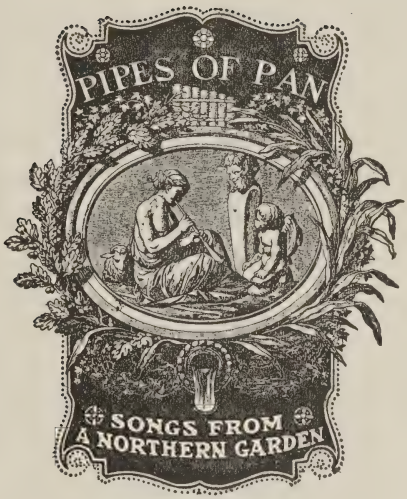
Where Alioth sails and sails
Forever round the pole,
And wonder brings no sad
Disquietude of soul.

And all their bodily beauty
Must flower a moment and die,
As the rain goes down the sea-rim,
The streamers up the sky;

Till time as a falling echo
Shall sift them over and o'er,
And the wind between the stars
Can tell their words no more.

Yet the lyric beat and cry
Which frets the poor frail things
Shall pass from joy to joy
Up through a thousand springs,

Teasing the sullen years
Out of monotony,
As reedbirds pour their rapture
By the unwintered sea.


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OUR LADY OF THE RAIN.

Across the purple valleys,
Along the misty hills,
By murmur-haunted rivers
And silver-gurgling rills,
By woodland, swamp and barren,
By road and field and plain,
Arrives the Green Enchantress,
Our Lady of the Rain.

Her pure and mystic planet
Is lighted in the west;
In ashy-rose and lilac
Of melting evening dressed,
With golden threads of sunset
Inwoven in her gown,

With glamour of the springtime
She has bewitched the town.

Her look is soft with dreaming
On old forgotten years;
Her eyes are grave and tender
With unpermitted tears;
For she has known the sorrows
Of all this weary earth,
Yet ever brings it gladness,
Retrieval and new birth.

And when her splendid pageant,
Sidereal and slow,
With teeming stir and import
Sweeps up from line to snow,
There's not an eager mortal
But would arise and make
Some brave unpromised venture
For her immortal sake.

For no man knows what power
Is sleeping in the seed,
What destiny may slumber
Within the smallest deed.
In calm no fret can hurry,
Nor any fear detain,
She brings our own to meet us —
Our Lady of the Rain.

She saw the red clay moulded
And quickened into man;
The sweetness of her spirit
Within his pulses ran;
The ardour of her being
Was in his veins like fire,
The unreluctant passion,
The unallayed desire.

'Twas she who brought rejoicing
To Babylon and Ur.

To Carthage and to Sidon
Men came to worship her.
Her soft spring rites were honoured
At Argolis and Troy,
And dark Caldean women
Gave thanks to her for joy.

With cheer and exaltation
With hope for all things born,
To hearten the disheartened,
To solace the forlorn,
Too gentle and all-seeing
For judgment or disdain,
She comes with loving kindness —
Our Lady of the Rain.

With magical resurgence
For all the sons of men
She crosses winter's frontier,
They know not whence nor when.

Yet silently as sunlight
Along the forest floor
Her step is on the threshold,
Her shadow at the door.

On many a lonely clearing
Among the timbered hills
She calls across the distance,
Until the twilight fills
With voice of loosened waters,
And from the marshy ground
The frogs begin refilling
Their flutes with joyous sound.

Then note by note is lifted
The chorus clear and shrill,
And all who hear her summons
Must answer to her will;
For she will not abandon
The old Pandean strain

That called the world from chaos —
Our Lady of the Rain.

And still her wondrous music
Comes up with early spring,
And meadowland and woodland
With silver wildness ring;
The sparrow by the roadside,
The wind among the reeds,
Whoever hears that piping
Must follow where it leads.

Though no man knows the reason,
Nor how the rumour spread,
Through canyon-streeted cities
Her message has been sped;
And some forgotten longing
To hear a bluebird sing
Bids folk from open windows
Look forth — and it is spring.

Come out into the sunshine,
You dwellers of the town,
Put by your anxious dolors,
And cast your sorrows down.
O, starved and pampered people,
How futile is your gain!
Behold, there comes to heal you
Our Lady of the Rain.

Go where the buds are breaking
Upon the cherry bough,
And the strong sap is mounting
In every tree-trunk now;
Where orchards are in blossom
On every spray and spire,
Go hear the orioles whistle
And pass like flecks of fire.

Go find the first arbutus
Within the piney wood,

And learn from that shy dweller
How sweet is solitude;
Go listen to the white-throat
In some remote ravine
Rehearse in tranquil patience
His ecstasy serene.

Go down along the beaches
And borders of the sea,
When golden morning kindles
That blue immensity,
And watch the white sails settle
Below the curving rim
Of this frail vast of colour,
Diaphanous and dim.

Go watch by brimming river
Or reedy-marged lagoon
The wild geese row their galley
Across the rising moon,

That comes up like a bubble
Out of the black fir-trees,
And ask what mind invented
Such miracles as these.

Who came when we were sleeping
And wrought this deathless lure,
This vivid vernal wonder
Improbable and sure?
Where Algol and Bootes
Mark their enormous range,
What seraph passed in power
To touch the world with change?

What love's unerring purpose
Reveals itself anew
In these mysterious transports
Of tone and shape and hue?
Doubt not the selfsame impulse
Throbs in thy restless side,

Craves at the gates of being,
And would not be denied.

Be thou the west wind's brother,
And kin to bird and tree,
The soul of spring may utter
Her oracles to thee;
Her breath shall give thee courage,
Her tan shall touch thy cheek,
The words of sainted lovers
Be given thee to speak.

Fear not the mighty instinct,
The great Aprilian Creed;
The House of Spring is open
And furnished for thy need.
But fear the little wisdom,
The paltry doubt and vain,
And trust without misgiving
Our Lady of the Rain.

What foot would fail to meet her,
And who would stay indoor,
When April in her glory
Comes triumphing once more —
When adder-tongue and tulip
Put on their coats of gold,
And all the world goes love-mad
For beauty as of old?

At every year's returning
The swallows will be here,
The stalls be gay with jonquils,
The dogwood reappear;
And up from the southwestward
Come back to us again
With sorceries of gladness —
Our Lady of the Rain.

IN A GRAND PRÉ GARDEN.

In a garden over Grand Pré, dewy in the morning
sun,
Here in earliest September with the summer
nearly done,
Musing on the lovely world and all its beauties,
one by one!

Bluets, marigolds, and asters, scarlet poppies,
purple phlox, —
Who knows where the key is hidden to those frail
yet perfect locks
In the tacit doors of being where the soul stands
still and knocks?

There is Blomidon's blue sea-wall, set to guard
the turbid straits
Where the racing tides have entry; but who
keeps for us the gates
In the mighty range of silence where man's spirit
calls and waits?

Where is Glooscaap? There's a legend of that
saviour of the West,
The benign one, whose all-wisdom loved beasts
well, though men the best,
Whom the tribes of Minas leaned on, and their
villages had rest.

Once the lodges were defenceless, all the warriors
being gone
On a hunting or adventure. Like a panther on
a fawn,
On the helpless stole a war-band, ambushed to
attack at dawn.

But with night came Glooscaap. Sleeping he surprised them; waved his bow;
Through the summer leaves descended a great frost, as white as snow;
Sealed their slumber to eternal peace and stillness long ago.

Then a miracle. Among them, while still death undid their thews,
Slept a captive with her children. Such the magic he could use,
She arose unharmed with morning, and departing, told the news.

He, too, when the mighty Beaver had the country for his pond,
All the way from the Pereau here to Bass River and beyond,
Stoned the rascal; drained the Basin; routed out that vagabond.

You can see yourself Five Islands Glooscaap
flung at him that day,
When from Blomidon to Sharp he tore the Bea-
ver's dam away, —
Cleared the channel, and the waters thundered
out into the bay.

(Do we idle, little children? Ah, well, there is
hope, maybe,
In mere beauty which enraptures just such ne'er-
do-wells as we!
I must go and pick my apples. Malyn will be
calling me!)

Here he left us — see the orchards, red and gold
in every tree! —
All the land from Gaspereau to Portapique and
Cheverie,
All the garden lands of Minas and a passage
out to sea.

You can watch the white-sailed vessels through
the meadows wind and creep.
All day long the pleasant sunshine, and at night
the starry sleep,
While the labouring tides that rest not have their
business with the deep!

So I get my myth and legend of a breaker-down
of bars,
Putting gateways in the mountains with their
thousand-year-old scars,
That the daring and the dauntless might steer
outward by the stars.

So my demiurgic hero lays a frost on all our
fears.
Dead the grisly superstition, dead the bigotry
of years,
Dead the tales that frighten children, when the
pure white light appears.

Thus did Glooscaap of the mountains. What doth Balder of the flowers,
Balder, the white lord of April, who comes back amid the showers
And the sunshine to the Northland to revive this earth of ours?

First, how came my garden, where untimely not a leaf may wilt?
For a thousand years the currents trenched the rock and wheeled the silt,
Dredged and filled and smoothed and levelled, toiling that it might be built.

For the moon pulled and the sun pushed on the derrick of the tide;
And a great wind heaved and blustered, — swung the weight round with a stride,
Mining tons of red detritus out of the old mountain side, —

Bore them down and laid them even by the mouth
of stream and rill
For the quiet lowly doorstep, for cemented joist
and sill
Of our Grand Pré, where the cattle lead their
shadows or lie still.

So my garden floor was founded by the labour-
ing frugal sea,
Deep and virginal as Eden, for the flowers that
were to be,
All for my great drowsy poppies and my mari-
golds and me.

Who had guessed the unsubstantial end and out-
come of such toil, —
These, the children of a summer, whom a breath
of frost would foil,
I, almost as faint and fleeting as my brothers of
the soil?

Did those vague and drafty sea-tides, as they
journeyed, feel the surge
Of the prisoned life that filled them seven times
full from verge to verge,
Mounting to some far achievement where its
ardour might emerge?

Are they blinder of a purpose in their courses
fixed and sure,
Those sea arteries whose heavings throb through
Nature's vestiture,
Than my heart's frail valves and hinges which
so perilously endure?

Do I say to it, "Give over!" — Can I will, and
it will cease?
Nay, it stops but with destruction; knows no res-
pite nor release.
I, who did not start its pulses, cannot bid them
be at peace.

Thus the great deep, framed and fashioned to
a thought beyond its own,
Rocked by tides that race or sleep without its
will from zone to zone,
Setting door-stones for a people in a century un-
known,

Sifted for me and my poppies the red earth we
love so well.
Gently there, my fine logician, brooding in your
lone grey cell!
Was it all for our contentment such a miracle
befell?

No; because my drowsy poppies and my mari-
golds and I
Have this human need in common, nodding as
the wind goes by;
There is that supreme within us no one life can
satisfy.

With their innocent grave faces lifted up to meet
my own,
They are but the stranger people, swarthy chil-
dren of the sun,
Gypsies tenting at our door to vanish ere the
year is done.

(How we idle, little children! Still our best of
tasks may be,
From distraction and from discord without base-
ness to get free.
I must go and pick my apples. Malyn will be
calling me!)

Humbly, then, most humbly ever, little brothers
of the grass,
With *Aloha* at your doorways I salute you as
you pass,
I who wear the mortal vesture, as our custom
ever was.

Known for kindred by the habit, by the tanned
and crimson stain,
Earthlings in the garb ensanguined just so long
as we remain,
You for days and I for seasons mystics by the
common strain,

Till we tread the virgin threshold of a great moon
red and low,
Clean and joyous while we tarry, and uncraven
when we go
From the rooftree of the rain-wind and the
broad eaves of the snow.

And this thing called life, which frets us like a
fever without name,
Soul of man and seed of poppy no mortality can
tame,
Smouldering at the core of beauty till it breaks in
perfect flame, —

What it is I know not; only I know they and
I are one,
By the lure that bids us linger in the great House
of the Sun,
By the fervour that sustains us at the door we can-
not shun.

From a little wider prospect, I survey their bright
domain;
On a rounder dim horizon, I behold the plough-
man rain;
All I have and hold so lightly, they will perish to
attain.

Waking at the word of April with the South
Wind at her heels,
We await the revelation locked beneath the four
great seals,
Ice and snow and dark and silence, where the
Northern search-light wheels.

Waiting till our Brother Balder walks the lovely
earth once more,
With the robin in the fir-top, with the rain-wind
at the door,
With the old unwearied gladness to revive us and
restore,

We abide the raptured moment, with the patience
of a stone,
Like ephemera our kindred, transmigrant from
zone to zone,
To that last fine state of being where they live
on joy alone.

O great Glooscaap and kind Balder, born of
human heart's desire,
When earth's need took shape and substance, and
the impulse to aspire
Passed among the new-made peoples, touching the
red clay with fire,

By the myth and might of beauty, lead us and
allure us still,
Past the open door of wonder and oblivion's
granite sill,
Past the curtain of the sunset in the portals of the
hill,

To new provinces of wisdom, sailless latitudes of
soul.
I for one must keep the splendid faith in good
your lives extol,
Well assured the love you lived by is my being's
source and goal.

Fearless when the will bids "Venture," or the
sleepless mind bids "Know,"
Here among my lowly neighbours blameless let
me come and go,
Till I, too, receive the summons to the silent
Tents of Snow.

IN A GRAND PRÉ GARDEN

In a garden over Grand Pré, bathed in the serenity
Of the early autumn sunlight, came these quiet thoughts to me,
While the wind went down the orchard to the dikes and out to sea.

(Idling yet? My flowery children, only far too well I see
How this day will glow forever in my life that is to be!
I must go and pick my apples. There is Malyn calling me!)

THE KEEPERS OF SILENCE

My hillside garden half-way up
The mountains from the purple sea,
Beholds the pomp of days go by
In summer's gorgeous pageantry.

I watch the shadows of the clouds
Stream over Grand Pré in the sun,
And the white fog seethe up and spill
Over the rim of Blomidon.

For past the mountains to the North,
Like a great caldron of the tides,
Is Fundy, boiling round their base,
And ever fuming up their sides.

Yet here within my valley world
No breath of all that tumult stirs;
The little orchards sleep in peace;
Forever dream the dark blue firs.

And while far up the gorges sweep
The silver legions of the showers,
I have communion with the grass
And conversation with the flowers.

More wonderful than human speech
Their dialect of silence is,
The simple Dorian of the fields,
So full of homely subtleties.

When the dark pansies nod to say
Good morning to the marigolds,
Their velvet taciturnity
Reveals as much as it withholds.

I always half expect to hear
Some hint of what they mean to do;
But never is their fine reserve
Betrayed beyond a smile or two.

Yet very well at times I seem
To understand their reticence,
And so, long since, I came to love
My little brothers by the fence.

Perhaps some August afternoon,
When earth is only half-aware,
They will unlock their heart for once, —
How sad if I should not be there!

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

My modest Northern garden
Is full of yellow flowers,
And quaking leaves and sunlight
And long noon hours.

It hangs upon the hillside
Above the little town;
And there in pleasant weather
You can look far down,

To the broad dikes of Grand Pré
Roamed over by the herds,
And the purple Minas water
Where fish the white sea-birds.

I watch the little vessels,
Where the slow rivers glide
Between the grassy orchards,
Come in upon the tide.

For daily there accomplished
Is the sea's legerdemain,
To fill the land with rivers
And empty it again.

Before you lies North Mountain,
Built like a long sea-wall —
A wonder in blue summer
And in the crimson fall.

The sea-fogs cloud and mantle
Along its fir-dark crest,
While under it the fruit-lands
Have shelter and have rest.

And when the goblin moonlight
Loiters upon her round
Of valley, marsh and mountain
To bless my garden-ground, —.

(The harvest moon that lingers
Until her task is done,
And all the grain is ripened
For her great lord, the sun,)

I know that there due northward,
Under the polar star,
Sir Blomidon is fronting
Whatever storms there are.

I cannot see those features
I love so well by day,
Calmed by a thousand summers,
Scarred by the winter's play;

Yet there above the battle
Of the relentless tides,
Under the solemn starlight
He muses and abides.

And in the magic stillness,
The moonlight's ghostly gleam
Makes me its sylvan brother,
To rove the world a-dream.

That wayward and oblivious
Mortal I seem to be
Shall habit not forever
This garden by the sea.

Not Blomidon nor Grand Pré
Shall be his lasting home,
Nor all the Ardise country
Give room enough to roam.

Even to-night a little
He strays, and will not bide
The gossip of the flowers,
The rumour of the tide.

He must be forth and seeking,
Beyond this garden-ground,
The arm-in-arm companion
For whom the sun goes round.

And in the soft May weather
I walk with you again,
Where the terraces of Meudon
Look down upon the Seine.

KILLOOLEET.

There's a wonderful woodland singer
In the North, called Killooleet, —
That is to say Little Sweetvoice
In the tongue of the Milicete,

The tribe of the upper Wolaastook,
Who range that waterway
From the blue fir hills of its sources
To the fogs and tides of the bay.

All day long in the sunshine,
All night long through the rains,
On the grey wet cedar barrens
And the lonely blueberry plains,

You may hear Killooleet singing,
Hear his *O sweet*
(Then a grace-note, then the full cadence),
Killooleet, Killooleet, Killooleet!

Whenever you dip a paddle,
Or set a pole in the stream,
Killooleet marks the ripple,
Killooleet knows the gleam;

Killooleet gives you welcome,
Killooleet makes you free
With the great sweet wilderness freedom
That holds over land and sea.

You may slide your birch through the alders,
Or camp where the rapids brawl,
The first glad forest greeting
Will still be Killooleet's call.

Wherever you drive a tent-pin,
Or kindle a fire at night,
Killooleet comes to the ridge-pole,
Killooleet answers the light.

The dark may silence the warblers;
The heavy and thunderous hush
That comes before storm may stifle
The pure cool notes of the thrush;

The waning season may sober
Bobolink, bluebird, and quail;
But Killooleet's stainless transport
Will not diminish nor fail.

Henceforth you shall love and fear not,
Remembering Killooleet's song
Haunting the wild waste places,
Deliberate, tranquil, and strong;

And so you shall come without cunning,
But wise in the simpler lore,
To the House of the Little Brothers,
And God will open the door.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S ON THE HILL.

"*Bartholomew with his cold dew.*"

Bartholomew, my brother,
I like your roomy church;
I like your way of leaving
No sinners in the lurch.

I wish the world were wealthy
In ministers like you,
When at the lovely August
You give the blessed dew.

I love your rambling Abbey,
So long ago begun,
Whose choirs are in the tree-tops,
Whose censer is the sun.

Its windows are the morning;
Its rafters are the stars;
The fog-banks float like incense
Up from its purple floors.

And where the ruddy apples
Make lamps in the green gloom,
The flowers in congregation
Are never pressed for room;

But in your hillside chapel,
Gay with its gorgeous paints,
They bow before the Presence,—
Sweet merry little saints!

THE CHURCH OF THE LEAVES.

In French Canadian legendry,
A rising from the dead recurs
Each Christmastide. The old *curé,*
With his parishioners

Around him, in the night returns;
And while his voice renews its bond
In the beloved offices,
The ghostly flock respond.

Just so, we keep the forms of faith
That wrought and moved us long ago;
We mark the height man's soul attained,
Forgetting it must grow.

Those venerable outgrown shells
Wherefrom the radiant life is fled, —
We wrong with our idolatry
The dogmas of the dead.

But He who walked with the world-soul
At twilight in Gethsemane,
Breathing among the listening boughs
Sweet prayers of charity,

Must daily with the wind return
About the dim world, to renew
The trembling litanies of the leaves,
The blessings of the dew.

He must revive with wind-sweet voice
The gospel hardly known to flesh,
Till the same spirit speaks again,
Interpreting afresh;

Till the vast house of trees and air
Reverberates from roof to floor
With meanings of mysterious things
We need to ask no more.

For still He walks these shadowy aisles,
Dreaming of beauties still to be,
More manly than our manliest,
Whose thought and love were free.

The pines are all His organ pipes,
And the great rivers are His choir;
And creatures of the field and tide
That reck not, yet aspire,

Our brothers of the tardy hope,
Put forth their strength in senses dim,
Threading the vast, they know not why,
Through eons up to Him.

I see Him in the orchard glooms,
Watching the russet apples tan,
With the serene regard of one
Who is more God than man.

And where the silent valley leads
The small white water through the hills,
And the black spruces stand unmoved,
And quiet sunlight fills

The world and time with large slow peace,
It is His patience waiting there
Response from lives whose breath is but
The echo of His prayer.

Brother of Nazareth, behold,
We, too, perceive this life expand
Beyond the daily need, for use
Thy thought must understand.

Not for ourselves alone we strive,
Since Thy perfection manifest
Bids self resign what self desired,
Postponing good for best.

And in the far unfretted years,
The generations we uphold
Shall reach the measure of Thy heart,
The stature of Thy mould.

THE DEEP HOLLOW ROAD.

Cool in the summer mountain's heart,
It lies in dim mysterious shade,
Left of the highway turning in
With grassy rut and easy grade.

The marshes and the sea behind,
The solemn fir-blue hills before;
Here is the inn for Heavy-heart
And this is weary Free-foot's door.

O fellows, I have known it long;
For joy of life turn in with me;
We bivouac with peace to-night,
And good-bye to the brawling sea.

You hear? That's master thrush. He knows
The voluntaries fit for June,
And when to falter on the flute
In the satiety of noon.

A mile or two we follow in
This rosy streak through forest gloom,
Then for the ample orchard slopes
And all the earth one snowy bloom!

MALYN'S DAISY.

You know it. Rays of ashy blue
Around a centre small and golden,
An autumn face of cheery hue
And fashion olden.

When the year rests at Michaelmas
Before the leaves must vanish faster,
The country people see it pass
And call it aster.

It does not come with joy and June;
It knows God's time is sometimes tardy;
And waits until we need the boon
Of spirit hardy.

So unobtrusive, yet so fair,
About a world it makes so human,
Its touch of grace is everywhere —
Just like a woman.

Along the road and up the dike
It wanders when the noons are hazy,
To tell us what content is like;
That's Malyn's daisy.

ABOVE THE GASPEREAU.

TO H. E. C.

There are sunflowers too in my garden on top
of the hill,
Where now in early September the sun has his
will, —
The slow autumn sun that goes leisurely, taking
his fill
Of life in the orchards and fir woods so moveless
and still;
As if, should they stir, they might break some illu-
sion and spill
The store of their long summer musing on top of
the hill.

The crowds of black spruces in tiers from the valley below,
Ranged round their sky-roofed coliseum, mount row after row.
How often there, rank above rank, they have watched for the slow
Silver-lanterned processions of twilight, — the moon's come and go!
How often as if they expected some bugle to blow,
Announcing a bringer of news they were breathless to know,
They have hushed every leaf, — to hear only the murmurous flow
Of the small mountain river sent up from the valley below!

How still through the sweet summer sun, through the soft summer rain,

They have stood there awaiting the summons should bid them attain
The freedom of knowledge, the last touch of truth to explain
The great golden gist of their brooding, the marvellous train
Of thought they have followed so far, been so strong to sustain,—
The bright gospel of sun and the pure revelations of rain!

Then the orchards that dot, all in order, the green valley floor,
Every tree with its boughs weighed to earth, like a tent from whose door
Not a lodger looks forth, — yet the signs are there gay and galore,
The great ropes of red fruitage and russet, crisp snow to the core.

Can the dark-eyed Romany here have deserted of yore
Their camp at the coming of frost? Will they seek it no more?
Who dwells in St. Eulalie's village? Who knows the fine lore
Of the tribes of the apple-trees there on the green valley floor?

Who, indeed? From the blue mountain gorge to the dikes by the sea,
Goes that stilly wanderer, small Gaspereau; who but he
Should give the last hint of perfection, the touch that sets free
From the taut string of silence the whisper of beauties to be!
The very sun seems to have tarried, turned back a degree,

To lengthen out noon for the apple-folk here by the sea.

What is it? Who comes? What's abroad on the blue mountainside?
A hush has been laid on the leaves and will not be defied.
Is the great Scarlet Hunter at last setting out on his ride
From the North with deliverance now? Were the lights we descried
Last night in the heavens his camp-fires seen far and wide,
The white signal of peace for whose coming the ages have cried?
"Expectancy lingers; fulfilment postponed," I replied,
When soul said uneasily, "Who is it haunts your hillside?"

All the while not a word from my sunflowers
here on the hill.
And to-night when the stars over Blomidon
flower and fill
The blue Northern garden of heaven, so pale and
so still,
From the lordly king-aster Aldebaran there by
the sill
Of the East, where the moonlight will enter, not
one will fulfil
A lordlier lot than my sunflowers here on the
hill.

So much for mere fact, mere impression. So
much I portray
Of the atmosphere, colour, illusion of one
autumn day,
In the little Acadian village above the Grand
Pré;

Just the quiet of orchards and firs, where the sun had full sway,
And the river went trolling his soft wander-song to the bay,
While roseberry, aster, and sagaban tangled his way.
Be you their interpreter, reasoner; tell what they say,
These children of silence whose patient regard I portray.

You Londoner, walking in Bishopsgate, strolling the Strand,
Some morning in autumn afford, at a fruit-dealer's stand,
The leisure to look at his apples there ruddy and tanned.
Then ask, when he's smiling to serve you, if choice can command

A Gravenstein grown oversea on Canadian land.
(And just for the whim's sake, for once, you'll
have no other brand!)
How teach you to tell them? Pick one, and
with that in your hand,
Bethink you awhile as you turn again into the
Strand.

"What if," you will say, — so smooth in your
hand it will lie,
So round and so firm, of so rich a red to the eye,
Like a dash of Fortuny, a tinge of some Indian
dye,
While you turn it and toss, mark the bloom, ere
you taste it and try, —
"Now what if this grew where the same bright
pavilion of sky
Is stretched o'er the valley and hillside he bids
me descry,

The windless valley of peace, where the seasons
go by,
And the river goes down through the orchards
where long shadows lie!"

There's the fruit in your hand, in your ears is
the roar of the street,
The pulse of an empire keeping its volume and
beat,
Its sure come and go day and night, while we
sleep or we eat.
Taste the apple, bite in to the juice; how abun-
dant and sweet!
As sound as your own English heart, and whole-
some as wheat.
There grow no such apples as that in your
Bishopsgate street.

Or perhaps in St. Helen's Place, when your
business is done

And the ledgers put by, you will think of the hundred and one
Commissions and errands to do; but what under the sun
Was that, so important? Ah, yes! the new books overrun
The old shelves. It is high time to order a new set begun.
Then off to the joiner's. You enter to see his plane run
With a long high shriek through the lumber he's working upon.
Then he turns from his shavings to query what you would have done.

But homeward 'tis you who make question. That song of the blade!
And the sharp sweet cry of the wood, what an answer it made!

What stories the joiner must hear, as he plies
his clean trade,
Of all the wild life of the forest where long
shadows wade
The untrodden moss, and the firs send a journey-
ing shade
So slow through the valley so far from the song
of his blade.

Come back to my orchards a moment. They're
waiting for you.
How still are the little grey leaves where the
pippins peep through!
The boughs where the ribstons hang red are
half-breaking in two.
Above them September in magical soft Northern
blue
Has woven the spell of her silence, like frost or
like dew,

Yet warm as a poppy's red dream. When All Saints shall renew
The beauty of summer awhile, will their dreaming come true?
Ah, not of my Grand Pré they dream, nor your London and you!

Their life is their own, and the surge of it. All through the spring
They pushed forth their buds, and the rainbirds at twilight would sing.
They put forth their bloom, and the world was as fairy a thing
As a Japanese garden. Then midsummer came with a zing
And the clack of the locust; then fruit-time and coolness, to bring
This aftermath deep underfoot with its velvety spring.

And they all the while with the fatherly, motherly care,
Taking sap from the strength of the ground, taking sun from the air,
Taking chance of the frost and the worm, taking courage to dare,
Have given their life that the life might be goodly and fair
In their kind for the seasons to come, with good witness to bear
How the sturdy old race of the apples could give and not spare.
To-morrow the harvest begins. We shall rifle them there
Of the beautiful fruit of their bodies, the crown of their care.

How lovingly then shall the picker set hand to the bough! —

Bid it yield, ere the seed come to earth or the
graft to the plough,
Not only sweet life for its kind, as the instincts
allow,
That savour and shape may survive generations
from now,
But life to its kin who can say, " I am stronger
than thou," —
Fulfilling a lordlier law than the law of the
bough.

I heard before dawn, with planets beginning to
quail, —
" Whoso hath life, let him give, that my purpose
prevail:
Whoso hath none, let him take, that his strength
may be hale.
Behold, I have reckoned the tally, I keep the
full tale.

Whoso hath love, let him give, lest his spirit
grow stale;
Whoso hath none, let him die; he shall wither
and fail.
Behold I will plenish the loss at the turn of the
scale.
He hath law to himself, who hath love; ye shall
hope and not quail."

Then the sun arose, and my sunflowers here on
the hill,
In free ceremonial turned to the East to fulfil
Their daily observance, receiving his peace and
his will, —
The lord of their light who alone bids the dark-
ness be nil,
The lord of their love who alone bids the life in
them thrill;
Undismayed and serene, they awaited him here
on the hill.

Ah, the patience of earth! Look down at the
dark pointed firs;
They are carved out of blackness; one pattern
recurs and recurs.
They crowd all the gullies and hillsides, the
gashes and spurs,
As silent as death. What an image! How
nature avers
The goodness of calm with that taciturn beauty
of hers!
As silent as sleep. Yet the life in them climbs
and upstirs.
They too have received the great law, know
that haste but defers
The perfection of time, — the initiate gospeller
firs.

So year after year, slow ring upon ring, they
have grown,

Putting infinite long-loving care into leafage
and cone,
By the old ancient craft of the earth they have
pondered and known
In the dead of the hot summer noons, as still
as a stone.
Not for them the gay fruit of the thorn, nor the
high scarlet roan,
Nor the plots of the deep orchard-land where
the apples are grown.

In winter the wind, all huddled and shuddering,
came
To warm his old bones by the fires of sunset
aflame
Behind the black house of the firs. When the
moose-birds grew tame
In the lumberer's camps in the woods, what
marvellous fame

His talk and the ice of his touch would spread
and proclaim,
Of the berg and the floe of the lands without
nation or name,
Where the earth and the sky, night and noon,
north and south are the same,
The white and awful Nirvana of cold whence
he came!

Then April, some twilight picked out with a great
yellow star,
Returning, like Hylas long lost and come back
with his jar
Of sweet living water at last, having wandered
so far,
Leads the heart out-of-doors, and the eye to the
point of a spar,
At whose base in the half-melted snow the first
Mayflowers are, —

And there the first robin is pealing below the great star.

So soon, oversoon, the full summer. Within those dark boughs,
Deliberate and far, a faltering reed-note will rouse
The shy transports of earth, till the wood-creatures hear where they house,
And grow bold as the tremble-eared rabbits that nibble and mouse.
While up through the pasture-lot, startling the sheep as they browse,
Where kingbirds and warblers are piercing the heat's golden drowse,
Some girl, whom the sun has made tawny, the wind had to blowse,
Will come there to gentle her lover beneath those dark boughs.

Then out of the hush, when the grasses are
frosty and old,
Will the chickadee's tiny alarm against winter
be rolled;
And soon, when the ledges and ponds are bitten
with cold,
The honk of the geese, that wander-cry stirring
and bold,
Will sound through the night, where those hardy
mariners hold
The uncharted course through the dark, as it
is from of old.

Ah, the life of the woods, how they share and
partake of it all,
These evergreens, silent as Indians, solemn and
tall!
From the goldenwing's first far-heard awaken-
ing call,

The serene flute of the thrush in his high beech hall,
And the pipe of the frog, to the bannered approach of the fall,
And the sullen wind, when snow arrives on a squall,
Trooping in all night from the North with news would appal
Any outposts but these; with a zest they partake of it all.

Lo, out of the hush they seem to mount and aspire!
From basement to tip they have builded, with heed to go higher,
One circlet of branches a year with their lift of green spire.
Nay, rather they seem to repose, having done with desire,

Awaiting the frost, with the fruit scarlet-bright
on the briar,
Each purpose fulfilled, each ardour that bade
them aspire.

Then hate be afar from the bite of the axe that
shall fell
These keepers of solitude, makers of quiet, who
dwell
On the slopes of the North. And clean be the
hand that shall quell
The tread of the sap that was wont to go mount-
ing so well,
Round on round with the sun in a spiral, slow
cell after cell,
As a bell-ringer climbs in a turret. That resinous
smell
From the eighth angel's hand might have risen
with the incense to swell

His offering in heaven, when the half-hour's silence befell.

Behold, as the prayers of the saints that went up to God's knees
In John's Revelation, the silence and patience of these
Our brothers of orchard and hill, the unhurrying trees,
To better the burden of earth till the dark suns freeze,
Shall go out to the stars with the sound of Acadian seas,
And the scent of the wood-flowers blowing about their great knees.

To-night when Altair and Alshain are ruling the West,
Whence Boötes is driving his dogs to long hunting addressed;

With Alioth plumb over Blomidon standing
at rest;
When Algol is leading the Pleiades over the
crest
Of the magical East, and the South puts Al-
pherat to test
With Menkar just risen; will come, like a sigh
from Earth's breast,
The first sob of the tide turning home, — one
distraught in his quest
Forever, and calling forever the wind in the
west.

And to-night there will answer the ghost of a
sigh on the hill,
So small you would say, Is it wind, or the frost
with a will
Walking down through the woods, who to-
morrow shall show us his skill

In yellows and reds? So noiseless, it hardly will thrill
The timorous aspens, which tremble when all else is still;
Yet the orchards will know, and the firs aware on the hill.

"O Night, I am old, I endure. Since my being began,
When out of the dark the aurora spread up like a fan,
I have founded the lands and the islands; the hills are my plan.
I have covered the pits of the earth with my bridge of one span.
From the Horn to Dunedin unbroken my long rollers ran,
From Pentland and Fastnet and Foyle to Bras d'Or and Manan,

To dredge and upbuild for the creatures of tribe
and of clan.
Lo, now who shall end the contriving my fingers
began?"

Then the little wind that blows from the great
star-drift
Will answer, "Thou tide in the least of the
planets I lift,
Considers the journeys of light. Are thy journey-
ings swift?
Thy sands are as smoke to the star-banks I
huddle and shift.
Peace! I have seeds of the grasses to scatter
and sift.
I have freighting to do for the weed and the
frail thistle drift.

"O ye apples and firs, great and small are
as one in the end.

Because ye had life to the full, and spared not
to spend;
Because ye had love of your kind, to cherish and
fend;
Held hard the good instinct to thrive, cleaving
close to life's trend;
Nor questioned where impulse had origin, — pur-
pose might tend;
Now, beauty is yours, and the freedom whose
promptings transcend
Attainment forever, through death with new
being to blend.
O ye orchards and woods, death is naught, love
is all in the end."

Ah, friend of mine over the sea, shall we not
discern,
In the life of our brother the beech and our
sister the fern,

As St. Francis would call them (his Minorites,
too, would we learn!),
In death but a door to new being no creature
may spurn,
But must enter for beauty's completion, — pass
up in his turn
To the last round of joy, yours and mine, whence
to think and discern?

Who shall say " the last round? " Have I passed
by the exit of soul?
From behind the tall door that swings outward,
replies no patrol
To our restless *Qui vive?* when is paid each
implacable toll.
Not a fin of the tribes shall return, having cleared
the great shoal;
Not a wing of the migrants come back from
below the dark knoll;

Yet the zest of the flight and the swimming who fails to extol?
Saith the Riddle, "The parts are all plain; ye may guess at the whole."
I guess, "Immortality, knowledge, survival of Soul."

To-night, with the orchards below and the firs on the hill
Asleep in the long solemn moonlight and taking no ill,
A hand will open the sluice of the great sea-mill, —
Start the gear and the belts of the tide. Then a murmur will fill
The hollows of midnight with sound, when all else is still,
A promise to hearten my sunflowers here on the hill.

THE BALLAD OF FATHER HUDSON.

You may doubt, but I heard the story
Just as I tell it to you;
And whatever you think of the setting,
I believe the substance true.

The great North Seaboard Province,
From Fundy to Chaleurs,
Is a country of many waters
And sombre hills of fir,

Where the moose still treads his snow-yard,
Breaking his paths to browse,
Where the caribou rove the barrens,
And the bear and the beaver house;

Where Killooleet sings from the ridge-pole
All through the night and the rain,
When the great blue Northern Summer
Comes back to the wilds again.

In that land of many rivers,
Bogan and lake and stream,
You may follow the trail in the water
With the paddle's bend and gleam,

Where the canoe, like a shadow
Among the shadows, slips
Under the quiet alders
And over the babbling rips;

You may go for a week together,
Reading footmark and trace
Of the wild shy woodland creatures,
Ere you meet a human face.

There where the Loyalists came
And the houses of men were few,
Little was all their wealth
And great were the hardships they knew;

But greater the hardy faith
They kept unflinching and fine,
And chose to be naught in the world
For the pride of a loyal line.

And there came Father Hudson,
As I've heard my father tell,
To serve the wilderness missions,
With sound of a Sunday bell.

Sober he was and a toiler,
Cared not for ease nor place;
They speak of his humour, too,
And the long droll shaven face.

Labour he did, and spared not,
In that vineyard wild and rough,
And often was sore with travel,
And often hungry enough,

Doubt not, as he carried the word
By portage and stream and trail,
That still in the mind of his people
The fire of truth should prevail.

And once was a church to build,
Little, lonely, apart,
Hardly more than a token
In the forest's great green heart.

With his own hands he reared it,
And often was wet to the hide,
And often slept on the shavings
Till the birds sang outside;

Then up in the fragrant morning,
And back to hammer and saw,
Building into the timbers
Love and devotion and awe.

So the fair summer went by,
And the church was finished at last;
But Father Hudson was called
To a country still more vast.

In the land of the creaking snowshoe
And the single track in the snow,
There's many a thing of wonder
No man will ever know.

It happened about the feast
Of the blessed Nativity,
When the snow lay heavy and silent
On every bending tree,

When the great north lights were stalking
Through the purple solitude,
Father Hudson's successor
Passed by the church in the wood.

And it came to his mind to ponder
What the requital may be
Of toil that is done in the body,
When the soul is at last set free;

And whether the flame of fervour
That is quenched in service here,
Survives through self-surrender
To illumine another sphere.

Then he saw the place all lighted,
Though it was not the hour of prayer,
And the strains of a triumphing organ
Came to him on the air.

In amazement he turned aside.
Who could the player be?
And who had lighted the lights?
The door still fast, the key

On its nail in the little porch!
He turned, put one foot on the sill,
Unlocked, opened, and entered.
The church was dark and still!

The white-robed spruces around it
Stood still with never a word;
The sifting snow at the window
Was all the good man heard.

Verily, Father Hudson,
Strong was thy sturdy creed,
But stronger and more enduring
The humble and holy deed,

Which so could enthral the senses
And lend the spirit sight
To behold the glory of labour
And love's availing might.

O brave are the single-hearted
Who deal with this life, and dare
To live by the inward vision, —
In the soul's native air.

THE WORD AT ST. KAVIN'S.

Once at St. Kavin's door
I rested. No sign more
Of discontent escaped me from that day.
For there I overheard
A Brother of the Word
Expound the grace of poverty, and say:

Thank God for poverty
That makes and keeps us free,
That lets us go our unobtrusive way,
Glad of the sun and rain,
Upright, serene, humane,
Contented with the fortune of a day.

Light-hearted as a bird,
I will obey the word
That bade the earth take form, the sea subside, —
That bids the wild wings go
Each year from line to snow,
When Spring unfurls her old green flag for guide, —

That bids the fleeting hosts
Along the shelving coasts
Once more adventure far by sound and stream, —
Bids everything alive
Awaken and revive, —
Resume the unperished glory and the dream.

I too, with fear put by,
Confront my destiny,
With not a wish but to arise and go,
Where beauty still may lead
From creed to larger creed,
Thanking my Maker that he made me so.

For I would shun no task
That kindliness may ask,
Nor flinch at any duty to my kind;
Praying but to be freed
From ignorance and greed,
Grey fear and dull despondency of mind.

So I would readjust
The logic of the dust,
The servile hope that puts its trust in things.
Ephemera of earth,
Of more than fleeting worth,
Are we, endowed with rapture as with wings.

(Type of the soul of man,
The slight yet stable plan!
Those creatures perishable as the dew,
How buoyantly they ride
The vast and perilous tide,
Free as the air their courses to pursue!)

And I would keep my soul
Joyous and sane and whole,
Unshamed by falsehood and unvexed by strife,
Unalien in that clear
And radiant atmosphere
That still surrounds us with a larger life,

When we have laid aside
Our truculence and pride,
Craven self-seeking, turbulent self-will,
Resolved this very day
No longer to obey
The tyrant Mammon who begods us still.

All selfish gain at best
Brings but profound unrest
And inward loss, despite our loud professions.
Think therefore what it is,
What surety of bliss,
To be absolved from burdensome possessions!

Shall God, who doth provide
The majesty and pride
And beauty of this earth so lavishly,
Deny them to the poor
And lowly and obscure?
Nay, they are given to all justly and free.

And if I share my crust,
As common manhood must,
With one whose need is greater than my own,
Shall I not also give
His soul, that it may live,
Of the abundant pleasures I have known?

And so, if I have wrought,
Amassed or conceived aught
Of beauty or intelligence or power,
It is not mine to hoard;
It stands there to afford
Its generous service simply as a flower.

How soon, my friends, how soon
We should obtain the boon
Of shining peace for which the toiler delves,
If only we would give
Our spirit room to live, —
Be, here and now, our brave untarnished selves;

If only we would dare
Espouse the good and fair
Our soul, unbound by custom, still perceives;
And without compromise
Or favour in men's eyes
Live by the truth each one of us believes!

Bow not to vested wrong
That we have served too long,
Pawning our birthright for a tinsel star!
Shall the soul take upon her
Time-service and mouth-honour?
Behold the fir-trees, how unswerved they are!

Native to sun and storm,
They cringe not nor conform,
Save to the gentle law their sound heart knows;
Each day enough for them
To rise, cone, branch, and stem,
A leaf-breadth higher in their tall repose.

Ah, what a travesty
Of man's ascent, were I
To bear myself less royally than they,
After the ages spent
In spirit's betterment,
Through rounds of aspiration and decay!

For surely I have grown
Within a cleft of stone,
With spray of mountain torrents in my face.
Slow soaring ring by ring
On moveless tiled wing,
I have seen earth below me sink through space.

I too in polar night
Have hungered, gaunt and white,
Alone amid the awful silences;
And fled on gaudy fin,
When the blue tides came in,
Through coral gardens under tropic seas.

And wheresoe'er I strove,
The greater law was love,
A faith too fine to falter or mistrust;
There was no wanton greed,
Depravity of breed,
Malice nor cant nor enmity unjust.

Nay, not till I was man,
Learned I to scheme and plan
The blackest depredation on my kind,
Converting to my gain
My fellow's need and pain,
In chartered pillage ruthless and refined.

Therefore, my friends, I say,
Back to the fair sweet way
Our mother Nature taught us long ago, —
The large primeval mood,
Leisure and amplitude,
The dignity of patience strong and slow.

Let us go in once more,
By some blue mountain door,
And hold communion with the forest leaves,
Where long ago we trod
The Ghost House of the God,
Through orange dawns and amethystine eves.

There bright-robed choristers
Make music in the firs,
Rejoicing in their service all day long;
And there the whole night through,
Along the dark still blue,
What glorying hosts with starry tapers throng!

There in some deep ravine
Whose walls are living green,
A sanctuary spacious, cool, and dim,
At earth-refreshing morn,
The pure white clouds are born, —
The incense of the ground sent up to Him.

No slighted task is there,
But equal craft and care
And love in irresistible accord,
The test and sign of art,
Bestowed through every part;
No thought of recognition or reward.

In that diviner air
We shall grow wise and fair,
Not frayed by hurry nor distraught by noise, —
Learn once again to be
Noble, courageous, free, —
Regain our primal ecstasy and poise.

Calm in the deep control
Of firmamental soul,
Let us abide unfretful and secure,
Knowledge and reason bent
To further soul's intent, —
Her veiled dim purposes remote yet sure.

For soul has led us now,
Science unravels how,
Through cell and tissue up from dust to man;
And will lead by and by,
No logic tells us why,
To fill her purport in the ampler plan.

Ah, trust the soul, my friends,
To seek her own great ends
Revealed not in the fashion of the hour!
For she outlives intact
The insufficient act,
Herself the source and channel of all power.

The soul survives, unmarred,
The mind care-worn and scarred,
That still is anxious over little things,
To come unto her own,
Through benefits unknown
And the green beauty of a thousand springs.

From infinite resource
She holds her gleaming course
Through toil, distraction, hindrance, and dismay,
Till some high destiny,
Accomplished by and by,
Reveals the splendid hope that was her stay.

Therefore should every hour
Replenish her with power
Of joy and love and freedom and fresh truth,
That we even in age
May share her heritage
Of ancient wisdom with the heart of youth.

Lore of the worldly wise
Is folly in her eyes.
All-energy, all-knowledge, and all-love,
Aware of deeps below
This pageant that we know,
Hers is the very faith accounted of

By Him who rose and bade
His friends be not afraid,
When peril rocked their fishing-boat at sea, —
Who bade the sick not fear,
The sad be of good cheer,
And in the hour they were made whole and free.

The sceptic sees but part
Of Nature's mighty heart.
A wide berth would I give that dangerous shoal —
Steer for the open sea,
No sight of land, but free.
Trusting my senses, shall I doubt my soul?

Let me each day anew
My outward voyage pursue
For the Far Islands and the Apple Lands.
Till through the breaking gloom
Some evening they shall loom,
With one pale star above the lilac sands.

Ah, that day I shall know
How the shy wood-flowers grow
In the deep forest, turning to the light;
Untrammelled impulse still
With glad obedient will
The only guide out of ancestral night.

Oh, I shall comprehend
Truth at my journey's end, —
What being is, and what I strive to be, —
What soul in beauty's guise
Eludes our wistful eyes,
Yet surely is akin to you and me.

Therefore, towards that supreme
Knowledge, that unveiled dream,
That promise of our life from day to day,
The grace of joyousness
Abide with us to bless
And help us forth along the Perfect Way!

The voice of the good priest
In benediction ceased;
The congregation like a murmur rose;
And when I set my pack
Once more upon my back,
'Twas light as any thistle-down that blows.

CHRISTMAS EVE AT ST. KAVIN'S.

To the assembled folk
At great St. Kavin's spoke
Young Brother Amiel on Christmas eve;
I give you joy, my friends,
That as the round year ends,
We meet once more for gladness by God's leave.

On other festal days
For penitence or praise
Or prayer we meet, or fulness of thanksgiving;
To-night we calendar
The rising of that star
Which lit the old world with new joy of living.

Ah, we disparage still
The Tidings of Good Will,
Discrediting Love's gospel now as then!
And with the verbal creed
That God is love indeed,
Who dares make Love his god before all men?

Shall we not, therefore, friends,
Resolve to make amends
To that glad inspiration of the heart;
To grudge not, to cast out
Selfishness, malice, doubt,
Anger and fear; and for the better part,

To love so much, so well,
The spirit cannot tell
The range and sweep of her own boundary!
There is no period
Between the soul and God;
Love is the tide, God the eternal sea.

Of old, men walked by fear;
And if their God seemed near,
It was the Avenger unto whom they bowed, —
A wraith of their own woes,
Vain, cruel, and morose,
With anger and vindictiveness endowed.

Of old, men walked by hate;
The ruthless were the great;
Their crumbling kingdoms stayed by might alone.
Men saw vast empires die,
Nor guessed the reason why, —
The simple law of life as yet unknown

As love. Then came our Lord,
Proclaiming the accord
Of soul and nature in love's rule and sway,
The lantern that he set
To light us, shining yet
Along the Perfect Path wherein we stray.

To-day we walk by love;
To strive is not enough,
Save against greed and ignorance and might.
We apprehend peace comes
Not with the roll of drums,
But in the still processions of the night.

And we perceive, not awe
But love is the great law
That binds the world together safe and whole.
The splendid planets run
Their courses in the sun;
Love is the gravitation of the soul.

In the profound unknown,
Illumined, fair, and lone,
Each star is set to shimmer in its place.
In the profound divine
Each soul is set to shine,
And its unique appointed orbit trace.

There is no near nor far,
Where glorious Algebar
Swings round his mighty circuit through the night,
Yet where without a sound
The winged seed comes to ground,
And the red leaf seems hardly to alight.

One force, one lore, one need
For satellite and seed,
In the serene benignity for all.
Letting her time-glass run
With star-dust, sun by sun,
In Nature's thought there is no great nor small.

There is no far nor near
Within the spirit's sphere.
The summer sunset's scarlet-yellow wings
Are tinged with the same dye
That paints the tulip's ply.
And what is colour but the soul of things?

(The earth was without form;
God moulded it with storm,
Ice, flood, and tempest, gleaming tint and hue;
Lest it should come to ill
For lack of spirit still,
He gave it colour, — let the love shine through.)

My joy of yesterday
Is just as far away
As the first rapture of my man's estate.
A lifetime or an hour
Has all there is of power.
In Nature's love there is no small nor great.

Of old, men said, "Sin not;
By every line and jot
Ye shall abide; man's heart is false and vile."
Christ said, "By Love alone
In man's heart is God known;
Obey the word no falsehood can defile."

The wise physician there
Of our distress had care,
And laid his finger on the pulse of time.
And there to eyes unsealed
Earth's secret lay revealed,
The truth that knows not any age nor clime.

The heart of the ancient wood
Was a grim solitude,
The sanction of a worship no less grim;
Man's ignorance and fear
Peopled the natural year
With forces evil and malign to him.

He saw the wild, rough way
Of cosmic powers at play;
He did not see the love that lay below.
Jehovah, Mars, and Thor,
These were the gods of war
He made in his own likeness long ago.

Then came the Word, and said,
"See how the world is made, —
With how much loving kindness, ceaseless care.
Not Wrath, but Love, call then
The Lord of beasts and men,
Whose hand sustains the sparrows in the air."

And since that day we prove
Only how great is love,
Nor to this hour its greatness half believe.
For to what other power
Will life give equal dower,
Or chaos grant one moment of reprieve!

Look down the ages' line,
Where slowly the divine
Evinces energy, puts forth control;
See mighty love alone
Transmuting stock and stone,
Infusing being, helping sense and soul.

And what is energy,
In-working, which bids be
The starry pageant and the life of earth?
What is the genesis
Of every joy and bliss,
Each action dared, each beauty brought to birth?

What hangs the sun on high?
What swells the growing rye?
What bids the loons cry on the Northern lake?
What stirs in swamp and swale,
When April winds prevail,
And all the dwellers of the ground awake?

What lurks in the dry seed,
But waiting to be freed,
Asleep and patient for a hundred years?
Till of earth, rain, and sun,
A miracle is done,
Some magic calls the sleeper and he hears, —

Arouses, puts forth blade
And leaf and bud, arrayed
Some morning in that garb of rosy snow,
The same fair matchless flower
As shed its petal-shower
Through old Iberean gardens long ago.

What is it that endures,
Survives, persists, immures
Life's very self, preserving type and plan? —
Yet learns the scope of change,
As the long cycles range, —
Looks through the eyes of bluebird, wolf, and man?

What lurks in the deep gaze
Of the old wolf? Amaze,
Hope, recognition, gladness, anger, fear.
But deeper than all these
Love muses, yearns, and sees,
And is the self that does not change nor veer.

Not love of self alone,
Struggle for lair and bone,
But self-denying love of mate and young,
Love that is kind and wise,
Knows trust and sacrifice,
And croons the old dark universal tongue.

In Nature you behold
But strivings manifold,
Battle and conflict, tribe warring against tribe?
Look deeper, and see all
That death cannot appal,
Failure intimidate, nor fortune bribe.

Our brothers of the air
Who come with June must dare,
Be bold and strong, have knowledge, lust, and choice;
Yet think, when glad hosts throng
The summer woods with song,
Love gave them beauty and love lends them voice.

Love surely in some form
Bade them brave night and storm, —
Was the dark binnacle that held them true,
Those tiny mariners
No unknown voyage deters,
When the old migrant longing stirs anew.

And who has understood
Our brothers of the wood,
Save he who put off guile and every guise
Of violence, — made truce
With panther, bear, and moose,
As beings like ourselves whom love makes wise?

For they, too, do love's will,
Our lesser clansmen still;
The House of Many Mansions holds us all;
Courageous, glad, and hale,
They go forth on the trail,
Hearing the message, hearkening to the call.

Oh, not fortuitous chance
Alone, nor circumstance,
Begot the creatures after their own kind;
But always loving will
Was present to fulfil
The primal purpose groping up to mind.

Adversity but bade
New puissance spring to aid,
New powers develop, new aptness come in play;
Yet never function wrought
Capacity from nought, —
Gave skill and mastery to the shapes of clay;

For always while new need
Evoked new thought through deed,
Old self was there to ponder, choose, and strive.
Fortune might mould, evolve,
But impulse must resolve,
Equipped at length to know, rejoice, and thrive.

And evermore must Love
Hearten, foresee, approve,
And look upon the work and find it good;
Else would all effort fail, —
The very stars avail
Less than a swarm of fireflies in a wood.

Take love out of the world
One day, and we are hurled
Back into night, to perish in the void.
Love is the very girth
And cincture of this earth,
No stitch to be unloosed, no link destroyed.

However wild and long
The battle of the strong,
Stronger and longer are the hours of peace,
When gladness has its way
Under the fair blue day,
And life aspires, takes thought, bids good increase.

So dawns the awaited hour
When the great cosmic power
Of love was first declared by Christ; so too
To-day we keep in mind
His name who taught mankind
That open secret old, yet ever new, —

Commemorate his birth
Who loved the kindly earth,
Was gentle, strong, compassionate, humane,
And tolerant and wise
And glad, — the very guise
And height of manhood not to lose again.

Shall we not then forego
Lavish perfunctory show,
The burdensome display, the empty gift,
That we may have to give
To every soul alive
Of love's illumination, cheer, and lift?

See rich and poor be fed!
Break up thy soul for bread,
Be loaves and fishes to the hungry heart,
That a great multitude,
Receiving of thy good,
May bless the God within thee and depart!

You workman, love your work
Or leave it. Let no irk
Unsteady the laborious hand, that still
Must give the spirit play
To follow her own way
To beauty, through devotion, care, and skill.

How otherwise find vent
For soul's imperious bent,
Than thro' these hands for wonder-working made,
When Love the sure and bold
Guides to the unforetold?
Blessed the craftsman who is unafraid!

Give Beauty her sweet will,
Make love your mistress still,
You lovers, nor delay! God's time be yours.
Make low-born jealousy
And doubt ashamed to be,
And cast old envious gossip out-of-doors.

Believe the truth of love,
Enact the beauty of love,
Praise and adore the goodliness of love.
For we are wise by love,
And strong and fair through love,
No less than sainted and inspired with love.

Remember the new word
The Syrian twilight heard,
That marvellous discourse which John records,
The one last great command
The Master left his band,
"Love one another!" And our time affords

What greater scope than just
To execute that trust?
Love greatly; love; love is life's best employ.
Neighbour, sweetheart, or friend,
Love wholly, to love's end;
So is the round world richer for your joy.

Love only, one or all!
Measure no great and small!
Love is a seed, life-bearing, undecayed;
And that immortal germ
Past bounds of zone and term
Will grow and cover the whole world with shade.

Sow love, it cannot fail;
Adversity's sharp hail
May cut all else to ground; fair love survives.
The black frost of despair
And slander's bitter air, —
Love will outlast them by a thousand lives.

Be body, mind and soul,
Subject to love's control,
Each loving to the limit of love's power;
And all as one, not three,
So is man's trinity
Enhanced and freed and gladdened hour by hour.

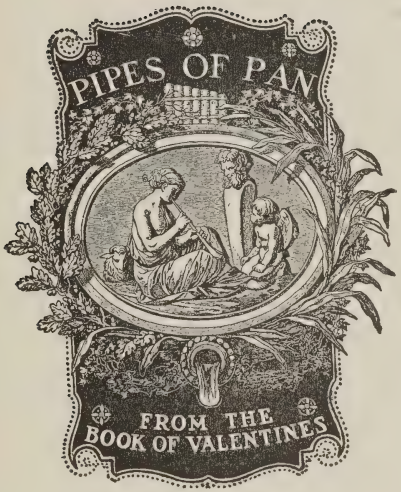
Beauty from youth to age,
The body's heritage,
Love will not forfeit by neglect nor shame;
And knowledge, dearly bought,
Love will account as nought,
Unless it serve soul's need and body's claim.

Let soul desire, mind ask,
And body crave; our task
Be to fulfil each want in love's own way.
So shall the good and true
Partake of beauty too,
And life be helped and greatened day by day.

Spend love, and save it not;
In act, in wish, in thought,
Spend love upon this lifetime without stint.
Let not the heart grow dry,
As the good hours go by;
Love now, see earth take on the glory tint.

Open the door to-night
Within your heart, and light
The lantern of love there to shine afar.
On a tumultuous sea
Some straining craft, maybe,
With bearings lost, shall sight love's silver star.

THE END.


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BALLAD OF THE YOUNG KING'S MADNESS.

In a Kingdom long ago, as the story comes to me,
There lived a sturdy folk by the borders of the sea;
The snow-tipped mountains behind them guarding the East and the North,
While open to Southward and Westward, were the sea-gates bidding them forth.

Launching their boats through the breakers, casting their nets in the tide,
The sea had given them daring, strength and endurance and pride;
Watching their sheep with the eagles on many a lonely hill,

The stars had given them knowledge and insight
and ghostly skill;
For wisdom comes to the waiting as water comes
to a mill,
From unsluiced sources of silence where the chat-
ter of life grows still.

I.

Over this sturdy people there ruled without
favour or greed
A man with the arm and heart of the olden
kingly breed.
There was never a sport nor contest, there was
never a horse to tame,
But the King would meet all comers, and was
ever first in the game.
A speaker of truth to all men, he carried his will
with a word;
And Justice dwelt in his borders, nor ever un-
sheathed her sword.

Likable, open and reckless, he neither bullied nor feared,
When over the rim of his empire threatening danger appeared,
But in the face of his council laughed in his yellow beard.

Yet his light-heart ways were a scandal to the seemly and the sage,
He would turn from the weightiest business to rally a love-sick page,
Twitting him for a laggard, making him blush with a jest,
Shaming him for a waster by the good wine spilt on his vest.

Never a band of minstrels passed, but he bade them in,
Haling the lads by the shoulder, taking the maids by the chin;

Till the courtyard gleamed with motley, and the palace rang with din.

Courtiers lived on his bounty, lights-of-love supped at his board.
Merry the time he gave them, priceless the wine he poured,
Lavish of all his substance for the gay and careless horde;
Till long lips groaning abhorrence had evil things to foretell.
But always the children loved him, and the women — passing well.

II.

So time wore on, and the King awoke one day with a start,
To hear a strange new whisper of discontent in his heart.

Pleasure he had in plenty, health, and companions, and power;
Yet what is all this life but a void and empty hour?

Fair was the golden morning with April over the hill.
He strolled to the gate of the palace and stood there grave and still,
Watching the mountain shadows, then shut his teeth on his will.
" Bring me a horse," he ordered. They saddled his favourite bay;
And down through the watered valley the young King rode away;
Down through the flowery orchards, where the river babbles and shines,
Past ford and smithy and farm, and up where the narrowing lines

Of tillage and pasture vanish in the dusk of the purple pines.
How speculation and rumour fluttered his folk that day!
"Who can fathom his fancies? Mad as a hare!" said they.

In a cleft of the solemn mountains, like a thought in earth's green heart,
Stood a hospice of recluse men, quiet, secluded, apart,
Having forgotten the world and left distraction behind,
For care of the troublous want and hunger of the mind.

There as the night was falling, the King on his red mare came,
And they have welcomed the stranger, asking not station nor name.

Who bides at the house of God needs neither
money nor fame.

Never an eyelid flickered, never a word betrayed
They knew the habit and bearing accustomed to
be obeyed;
But after the rule of their order, equal in every-
thing,
With kingly love for a brother the brothers served
their King.

They gave him his seat at table, cell and habit
and stall.
The scanty fare and the hours of prayer, meekly
he took them all;
Nor ever they found him wanting in duties great
or small.

Lowly he sat before them and many a lecture
heard,

Questioned and reasoned and listened, argued,
proved and conferred,
And by many a lonely candle pondered the printed
word.

Daily the power of knowledge grew and spread
in his face;
Daily the look of the scholar glowed with a finer
trace;
Daily the tan-flush faded and ever he grew in
grace,
As understanding within him climbed to her law-
ful place.

So from the man of sinew they made a student
at last,
Thoughtful and grave as he had been brave; till,
lo, three years had passed,
And the young King yawned one day, stretching
himself in the sun,

And murmured: "Now let's see what their book-
learning has done!
The arms grow feeble, alack! The foot and eye
grow slow;
Let's put their lore to the test. Good friends,
this day I go."

So said, so done. Mused the Brothers, watching
him down the hill:
"Feeble must be our virtue, if this hope comes to
ill."
They saw him lost in dust; and the sundown's
dying rose
Kindled their lofty hill-crest in its eternal snows.

III.

Now well the Kingdom prospered while the
young King was away,
For wise were the heads of his council, leaders
of men in their day,

Stubborn at fronting clamour, strong to govern
and sway,
Of tested honour and flawless tried in the world's
assay.

Yet there was joy at his coming, throngs that
laughed with delight,
Cheers as he passed and waving, children held in
his sight,
Flags hung out at the windows, and bonfires lit
in the night.
Comrades met on the corner, cronies talked in
the door,
" The merry times are returning; we shall have
revels once more."

But they reckoned without their host, if they
thought the glorious days
Of the King's wild youth had returned with their
drinking and masques and plays.

Sober he sat at council, wisely he judged and
decreed,
Till the frivolous gaped and muttered: "A
paragon indeed!"

Tireless, toiling and thoughtful, steadfast, kingly
and tall,
But lonely he lived, unloving, blameless before
them all,
With never a rose in his bower nor a bosom-
friend in his hall.

And ever his brow grew whiter, his eye more
hungry bright,
For the blessing of peace escaped him, though he
toiled by day and night.
By lamplight and daylight he laboured, till his
visage grew lean and grim,
While his people saw and wondered, and their
hearts went out to him.

So he strove for a year or more, and never was
seen to fail
In the least or the greatest matter where dili-
gence might avail.
Yet ever he grew more restless, and ever his
cheek more pale.

IV.

Now it chanced on another morning like that
when he rode away,
The King must come to his seaboard, where a
foreign galleon lay,
Black hull and gleaming canvas, with her decks
in trim array;
Long and graceful and speedy as a flying fish
was she,
Showing the scarlet pennon of the gypsies of the
sea.

There in a dream he stood; watching the surf
and the sand;
Then all of a sudden he laughed, as the rowers
rowed to land.
" God of my fathers," he cried. " What manner
of fool am I?
A landsman all my life, a sea-king will I die."

Needs must they humour him then, whispering,
" Mad once more! "
As they heard him speak to the sailors, and saw
him rowed from the shore.
Small room to parley or caution, and smaller use
to deplore;
When a strong man comes to his stronghold, fate
must yield him the door.

Lightly he stood in the boat, when the bending
rowers rowed;

And the wind and the tide and the sun freshened
and sparkled and glowed.
There lay the sea before him fair as an open road.

Last they saw of the King was at the helmsman's
side,
Gay in the light of adventure, while the vessel
swung on the tide.
With a song they hove her anchor; the sails
drew taut and free;
And she heeled to the wind and lessened on the
long blue slope of the sea.

V.

The sun came up, the sun went down, the tide
drew out and in,
But never a word that seaport heard from for-
eigner or kin,
Rower, merchant, or sailorman, or the gypsies of
the sea,

Whither their prince had vanished, or what his fate might be;
Till a thousand suns had circled, and twice a thousand tides
Had swung the swaying harbour buoys and brimmed through the channel guides.

Then through a winter twilight when the sun was a disk of red,
The keen-eyed watcher beheld, as he gazed from the harbour-head,
A moving speck like a seahawk crossing that targe of flame;
And beating up from the sea-rim the gypsy galleon came.

And why is she decked with pennons, and trimmed with cloth of gold?
And what are these scarlet trappings the harbour folk behold?

What means her glory of banners fluttering on
the breeze,
Brave as the coloured autumn that is the pride
of the trees?
Has she rifled a sea-king's treasure and plundered
the isles of the seas?

Slowly she passed the entry, the white sails low-
ered and furled,
And there was our long-lost truant from the
other side of the world.
On the deck he stood, the figure of a man to
make men bold,
A browned and hardy master, as debonair as of
old,
The strength of his hands as aforetime, the
scholar's light on his brow,
But something passing knowledge in his look and
bearing now,

The calm of a radiant purpose, the joy of unerring quest,
The poise of perfected being when the soul attains her best.
He had ruled with power and pleasure, he had searched and found out lore;
And now his unfainting spirit had discovered the one thing more.

But the curious eye forsook him to greet with amazed regard
Another who stood at the taffrail by the sheet of the great main-yard;
Fine as a mast in stature, eager, unflinching, and free,
With hair like the sun's raw gold and eyes like crumbs of the sea;
Straight-browed — the imperial bearing of one who is born to sway,

Deep-bosomed with all the ardour that kindles
our wondrous clay;
Regent of glad dominions, a sea-trove out of the
vast
Wide welter of life. "A hostage fit for our king
at last!"

Threefold is the search for perfection that leads
through creation's plan —
Through immemorial nature and the restless
heart of man;
Beauty of shape and colour to gladden and profit
the eye,
Truth beyond cavil or question to answer the
reason why,
And the blameless spirit's portion — the joy that
shall not die.

The dauntless soul must wander to accomplish
and attain

This balance of all her powers by the lead of
love, or remain
A stranger to peace forever in sorrow, defeat, and
pain.

Flushed with the cheers of welcome, lightly the
king, all pride,
Handed the girl, all beauty, over the vessel's side.
Then in a lull of their salvos, to the wondering
crowd that rings
The pierhead, eager to question, "Our queen,"
said the sanest of kings.

ACROSS THE COURTYARD.

That is the window over there
With the closed shutters and the air
Of a deserted place, like those
Abandoned homesteads whose repose
Haunts us with mystery. Inside
Who knows what tragedy may hide?

This window has been sealed up so
A fortnight now. A month ago
Just about dusk you should have seen
The vision I saw smile and lean
From that same window. Spring's return,
When daffodils and jonquils burn
Under the azure April day,
Is not more lovely nor more gay.

The world — at least, our artist world
Where tubes are pinched and brushes twirled
In the long task to reproduce
God's masterpieces for man's use —
Knows Jacynth for the loveliest
Of all its models and the best.
Why, half the portraits in the town,
From Mrs. Bigwig, Jr.'s down,
Have that same perfect taper hand.
(If you have wit to understand
A woman's vanity, you know
Why they should wish to have it so),
Those same long fingers smooth and round,
Faultless as petals, and not found
Twice in a generation. Well,
They're Jacynth's. But you need not tell
The trick. In this world art must live
On what the world's caprice will give.

Delightful folly! But far more
Delightful beauty we adore
And follow humbly day by day,
Her difficult, enchanted way.
(Dear beauty, still beyond the reach
Of paint, or music, or of speech!)
We toil and triumph and despair,
Then on a morn look up, and there
Some girl goes by, or there's a dash
Of colour on the clouds — a flash
Of inspiration caught between
Chinks in the workshop's grey routine.
One hint of glory through the murk,
And God has criticized our work.

So we plod on, and so one day
It happened toward the end of May,
When the long twilight comes, and when
Our northern orchards bloom again —
Even our poor old courtyard tree,

Knowing the time that bids him be
One of the hosts that leaf and sing
In the revival of the spring,
Dons his green robe of joy. You know
How idle, then, a man will grow.
I had been sitting lost in thought
Of how our best dreams come to naught,
And we are left mere daubers still
For want of knowledge, lack of skill —
So many of us are, I mean!
The door was open, and the screen
And curtains turned back everywhere
For the first breath of summer air,
That came in like a wanderer
From far untroubled lands, to stir
The prints along the wall, and bring
Our dreams of greatness back with spring.

Suddenly, I looked up, aware
Before I looked, of some one there —

You know how. In the doorway stood
A tall girl dressed in black. How good
A scrap of actual beauty is,
After our unrealities!
The copper-coloured hair; the glint
Of tea-rose in her throat's warm tint;
The magic and surprise that go
With level blue-grey eyes; the slow
Luxurious charm of poise and line,
Half-Oriental, half-divine,
And altogether human. Oh,
One must have known her then, to know
How faultless beauty still transcends
The bound where faultless painting ends.
But you may gather here and there
Faint glimpses and reports of her
In the best work of all the men
Who painted her as she was then,
Splendid and wonderful. To me,
For colour and for symmetry,

In her young glory there she seemed
The flame-like one of whom they dreamed
Who worshipped beauty in old days
With singleness of joy and praise;
Some great Astarte come to bless
This old world with new loveliness;
My own ideal come to life,
After the failure and the strife,
To prove I dreamed not all in vain
In poverty beside the Seine.

There came a sudden leap at heart
That made my pulses stop and start,
The surge and flood of sense that sweep
Over our nature's hidden deep,
When we look up and recognize
Our vision in an earthly guise.
Then reason must resign control
To the indubitable soul,

Put off despair, arise and dance
To the joy-music of romance.

For one great year she posed for me;
Came in and out familiarly,
And made the studio her home
Almost — not quite; for always some —
What shall I say? — reserve or pride,
Mysterious and aloof, belied
By the soft loving languorous mien,
Invested her, enthroned serene
Above importunings. Who knows,
If she had chosen as I chose —
Flung heart and head and hand away
On the great venture of a day;
Poured love and passion and romance
In the frail mould of circumstance —
Had she but dared be one of two,
We might have made the world anew!
However much it might have cost,

Who knows what good may have been lost,
What passing great reward?

One day
When work was done she turned to say
Her soft good night, and tripped down-stair
With rustling skirts and her fine air
Of breeziness, humming a catch
From some street-song. I heard the latch
Click after her, and she was gone.
Next day I waited. It wore on
To afternoon, and still no sign
Of peril near this dream of mine.
A year went by, and not a word
Of the lost Jacynth could be heard.

May came again; the wind once more
Was blowing by the open door,
And I saw something over there
Across the yard that made me stare.

Strangers had recently arrived
On that third floor, and Fate contrived
One of her small dramatic scenes
Which make us wonder what life means,
And whether it is all a play
For our diversion by the way.
There at the window I caught sight
Of a girl's figure. The crisp white
Of the fresh gown passed and repassed,
Strangely familiar, till at last,
"Jacynth, of course! Who else?" I cried.
And on the instant she espied
Me watching her; quick as a flash
And smiling, ran, threw up the sash
To lean far out. "How do you do,
My friend?" "Why, Jacynth, how are you,
After this long, long time?" I said.
"Thank you, quite well." Her pretty head
Was tilted up, in every line
An old medallion rare and fine.

"Yes, it's a long time, isn't it,
Since that first day I came to sit
For your great Lilith? Tell me how
They hung it at the Fair. And now
That we are neighbours once again,
Do come to see me." It was plain
From the unwonted vanity
Of tone, as she ran on to me,
Some strange ambition, plan, or hope
Had come to give her pride new scope.
Somehow she had acquired the chill
Of worldliness; I missed the thrill
Of eager radiance she had
When we were comrades free and glad.
Some volatile and subtle trace
Of soul had vanished from her face,
Leaving the brilliancy that springs
From polished and enamelled things.
The beauty of the lamp still shone
With lustre, but the flame was gone.

There was so evident in her
The smug complacent character
Of prosperous security,
That when, with just a flick at me,
She added, gaily as before,
"It isn't Jacynth any more,
It's Mrs." — some one — here was I,
Too much astonished to reply,
Before she vanished. From that day
The rest is blank, think what you may.
There is her window, as you see,
Closed on a teasing mystery.

I think, as I recall her here,
How much life means beyond the mere
Safety, convenience, and the pose
Respectability bestows;
The beauty of the questing soul
In every face, beyond control
Is dimmed by wearing any mask

That dull conformity may ask.
How almost no one understands
The unworldliness that art demands!
How few have courage to retain
Through years of doubtful stress and strain
The resolute and lonely will
To follow beauty, to fulfil
The dreams of their prophetic youth
And pay the utmost price of truth!
How few have nerve enough to keep
The trail, and thread the dark and steep
By the lone lightning-flash that falls
Through sullen murky intervals!
How many faint of heart must choose
The steady lantern for their use,
And never, without fear of Fate,
Be daring, generous and great!

Where is she now? What sudden change
Clouded our day-dream? Love is strange!

A NEIGHBOUR'S CREED.

"Nor knowest thou what argument
Thy life to thy neighbour's creed has lent."

I.

All day the weary crowds move on
Through the grey city's stifling heat,
With anxious air, with jaded mien,
To strife, to labour, to defeat.

But I possess my soul in calm,
Because I know, unvexed by noise,
Somewhere across the city's hum
Your splendid spirit keeps its poise.

II.

Because I see you bright and brave,
I say to my despondent heart,
"Up, loiterer! Put off this guise
Of gloom, and play the sturdier part!"

Three things are given man to do:
To dare, to labour, and to grow.
Not otherwise from earth we came,
Nor otherwise our way we go.

Three things are given man to be:
Cheerful, undoubting, and humane,
Surviving through the direst fray,
Preserving the untarnished strain.

Three things are given man to know:
Beauty and truth and honour. These
Are the nine virtues of the soul,
Her mystic powers and ecstasies.

And when I see you bravely tread
That difficult and doubtful way,
"Up, waverer; wilt thou forsake
Thy comrade?" to my soul I say.

Then bitterness and sullen fear,
Mistrust and anger, are no more.
That quick gay step is in the hall;
That rallying voice is at the door.

TO ONE IN DESPAIR.

I.

O die not yet, great heart; but deign
A little longer to endure
This life of passionate fret and strain,
Of slender hope and joy unsure!

Take Contemplation by the sleeve,
And ask her, " Is it not worth while
To teach my fellows not to grieve, —
To lend them courage in a smile?

" Is it so little to have made
The timorous ashamed of fear, —
The idle and the false afraid
To front existence with a sneer? "

For those who live within your sway
Know not a mortal fear, save one, —
That some irreparable day
They should awake, and find you gone.

II.

Live on, love on! Let reason swerve;
But instinct knows her own great lore,
Like some uncharted planet's curve
That sweeps in sight, then is no more.

Live on, love on, without a qualm,
Child of immortal charity,
In the great certitude and calm
Of joy free-born that shall not die.

III.

We dream ourselves inheritors
Of some unknown and distant good,

That shall requite us for the faults
Of our own lax ineptitude.

But soon and surely they may come,
Whom love makes wise and courage free,
Into their heritage of joy, —
Their earth-day of eternity.

IV.

The thought that I could ever call
Your name, and you would not be here,
At moments sweeps my soul away
In the relentless tide of fear;

Then from its awful ebb returns
The sea of gladness strong and sure.
By this I know that love is great;
By this I know I shall endure.

V.

When I shall have lain down to sleep,
I pray no sound to break my rest.
No seraph's trumpet through the night
Could touch my weary soul with zest.

But oh, beyond the reach of thought
How I should waken and rejoice,
To hear across the drift of time
One golden echo of your voice!

AT THE GREAT RELEASE.

When the black horses from the house of Dis
Stop at my door and the dread charioteer
Knocks at my portal, summoning me to go
On the far solitary unknown way
Where all the race of men fare and are lost,
Fleeting and numerous as the autumnal leaves
Before the wind in Lesbos of the Isles;

Though a chill draught of fear may quell my soul
And dim my spirit like a flickering lamp
In the great gusty hall of some old king,
Only one mordant unassuaged regret,
One passionate eternal human grief,

Would wring my heart with bitterness and tears
And set the mask of sorrow on my face.

Not youth, nor early fame, nor pleasant days,
Nor flutes, nor roses, nor the taste of wine,
Nor sweet companions of the idle hour
Who brought me tender joys, nor the glad sound
Of children's voices playing in the dusk;
All these I could forget and bid good-bye
And pass to my oblivion nor repine.

Not the green woods that I so dearly love,
Nor summer hills in their serenity,
Nor the great sea mystic and musical,
Nor drone of insects, nor the call of birds,
Nor soft spring flowers, nor the wintry stars;
To all the lovely earth that was my home
Smiling and valiant I could say farewell.

But not, oh, not to one strong little hand,
To one droll mouth brimming with witty words,
Nor ever to the unevasive eyes
Where dwell the light and sweetness of the world
With all the sapphire sparkle of the sea!
Ah, Destiny, against whose knees we kneel
With prayer at evening, spare me this one woe!

MORNING AND EVENING.

When the morning wind comes up the mountain,
Stirring all the beech-groves of the valley,
And, before the paling stars have vanished,
The first tawny thrush disturbs the twilight
With his reed-pipe, eerie calm and golden —
The earth-music marvellous and olden —

Then good fortune enters at my doorway,
And my heart receives the guest called Gladness;
For I know it is that day of summer
When I shall behold your face ere nightfall,
And this earth, as never yet in story,
Ledge to hill-crest dyed in purple glory.

MORNING AND EVENING

When the evening breath draws down the valley,
And the clove is full of dark blue shadows
Moving on the mountain-wall, just silvered
By the large moon lifted o'er the earth-rim,
At the moment of transported being,
When soul gathers what the eyes are seeing,

Sense is parted like a melted rain-mist,
And our mortal spirits run together,
Saying, " O incomparable comrade! "
Saying, " O my lover, how good love is! "
Then the twilight falls; the hill-wind hushes;
Note by note once more the cool-voiced thrushes.

IN AN IRIS MEADOW.

Once I found you in an iris meadow
Down between the seashore and the river,
Playing on a golden willow whistle
You had fashioned from a bough in springtime, —
Piping such a wild melodious music,
Full of sunshine, sadness and sweet longing,
As the heart of earth must have invented,
When the wind first breathed above her bosom,
And above the sea-rim, silver-lighted,
Pure and glad and innocent and tender,
The first melting planets glowed in splendour.

There it was I loved you as a lover,
Then it was I lost the world forever.

IN AN IRIS MEADOW

For your slender fingers on the notches
Set free more than that mere earthly cadence,—
Loosed the piercing stops of mortal passion, —
Touched your wood-mate with the spell of wonder,
And the godhead in the man awakened.
Virgin spirit with unsullied senses,
There was earth for him all new-created,
In a moment when the music's rapture
Bade soul take what never thought could capture:

Just the sheer glad bliss of being human,
Just the large content beyond all reason,
Just the love of flowers, hills and rivers,
Shadowy forests and lone lovely bird-songs
When the morning brightens in the sea-wind;
And beyond all these the fleeting vision
Of the shining soul that dwelt within you,
(Magic fragrance of the meadow blossom)
All the dear fond madness of the lover.

These, all these the ancient wood-god taught me
From the theme you piped and the wind brought me.

Was it strange that I should stop the playing?
Was it strange that I should touch the blossom?
Must (a man's way!) see whence came the music,
Must with childish marvel count the petals?
O but sweet were your uncounted kisses!
Wild and dear those first impulsive fondlings,
When your great eyes swept me, then went seaward,
Too o'ercharged to bear the strain of yearning,
And the little head must seek this shoulder!
Then we heard once more the wood-god's measure,
And strange gladness filled the world's great leisure.

A LETTER FROM LESBOS.

More beloved than ever yet was mortal!
Oh, but doubt not, lover, I do love thee!
When he wrote these words, bitter and lonely
Was that tender heart in wintry Lesbos.
Kindly gods but speed my journey thither,
(How the wind burns from the scorching desert,
Through the scarlet beds of scentless blossom!)
And make fortunate that swift home-coming!
For I fret in this Egyptian exile,
Too long parted, sickening for the home-wind
And the first white gleam of Mitylene.

Blessed words to brave the stormy sea-way!
In this stifling city's sultry languor

I must now with joy and tears and longing,
Now the hundredth time at least re-read them:

It is the bitter season of the year;
The mournful-piping sea-wind is abroad
With driving snow and battle in the air,
Shaking the stubborn rooftree gust by gust;
And under the frost-grey skies without a sun
Cold desolation wraps the wintry world.

And I, my Gorgo, keep the fireside here,
Chill-hearted, brooding, visited by doubt,
Wondering how Demeter or wise Pan
Will work the resurrection of the spring,
Serene and punctual at the appointed time,
With the warm sun, the swallows at the eaves,
The slant of rain upon the purple hill,
The flame-like crocus by the garden wall,
The light, the hope, the gladness all returned
With maidens singing the Adonis song!

But ah, more doubtful sad and full of fear
There comes to me; disconsolate and lone,
The thought of thee, my Gorgo, lovelier
Than any premonition of the spring.

I seem to see that radiant smile once more,
The heaven-blue eyes, the crocus-golden hair,
The rose-pink beauty passionate and tall,
Dear beyond words and daring with desire,
For which thy lover would fling life away
And traffic the last legacy of time.

Ah, Gorgo, too long absent, well I know
The sun will shine again and spring come back
Her ancient glorious golden-flowered way,
And gladness visit the green earth once more,
But where in all that wonder wilt thou be,
The very soul and spirit of the spring?

If the high gods in that triumphant time
Have calendared no day for thee to come
Light-hearted to this doorway as of old,
Unmoved I shall behold their pomps go by,—
The painted seasons in their pageantry,
The silvery processions of the moon,
And all the infinite ardours unsubdued,
Pass with the wind replenishing the earth.

Incredulous forever I must live,
And, once thy lover, without joy behold
The gradual uncounted years go by,
Sharing the bitterness of all things made.

Ah, not thus! My hot tears sweet and tender,
And the storm within this heaving bosom,
Could he see, would tell him what the truth is,—
How the heart of Gorgo breaks to reach him,
And her arms are weak with empty waiting
Through this long monotony of summer.

Gentle spirit, grieve not so, for love's sake!
How he raves beyond the touch of reason:

O heart of mine, be hardier for ills,
Since thou hast shared the sorrows of the gods
And been partaker of their destiny.
Have I not known the bitterness that sighed
In mournful grief upon the river marge,
And once obscured the lonely shining sun,
When Syrinx and when Daphne fled away?
Not otherwise in sorrow did I fare
Whom Gorgo, loveliest of mortals, loved,
And whose own folly that same Gorgo lost.

O lovers, hear me! Be not lax in love,
Nor let the loved one from you for a day.
For time that is the enemy of love,
And change that is the constant foe of man,
But wait the turn of opportunity
To fret the delicate fabric of our life

With doubt and slow forgetfulness and grief,
Till he who was a lover once goes forth
A friendless soul to front the joyless years,
A brooding uncompanioned wanderer
Beneath the silent and majestic stars.

Now what folly waits on brooding passion!
Truly not in solitude do mortals
Reach the height and nobleness of heroes.
Can it be so swiftly fades remembrance?
Oh, my fond heart prompt him! This is better:

The red flower of the fire is on the hearth,
The white flower of the foam is on the sea.
The golden marshes and the tawny dunes
Are gleaming white with snow and flushed with rose
Where the pure level wintry sunlight falls.
In the rose-garden, crimsoning each bough
Against the purple boulders in the wall,

Shine the rose-berries careless of the cold.
While down along the margin of the sea,
Just where the grey beach melts to greener grey,
With mounting wavering combing plunge and
charge,
The towering breakers crumble in to shore.

Now from that quiet picture of the eye,
Hark to the trampling thunder and long boom,
The lone unscansioned and mysterious rote
Whose cadence marked the building of the world,
The old reverberant music of the sea!

Ah, to what ghostly piping of strange flutes
Strays in lost loveliness Persephone,
Heavy at heart, with trouble in her eyes,
From her deep-bosomed mother far away,
In the pale garden of Aidoneus now?
And oh, what delicate piping holds thee, too,
My Kore of the beauteous golden head?

What voice, what luring laughter bid thee stay
So long from thine own lover and so far?
Who touches with soft words thy tender heart,
In some bright foreign city far from here,
My unforgotten Gorgo beautiful?

Doubting still? O bitterest of absence
That the moth of doubt should mar the texture
And fine tissue of the spirit's garment,
The one garb of beauty which the soul wears, —
Love, the frailest, costliest of fabrics!
Ah, doubt not! O lover, lover, lover,
Who first taught the childlike heart of mortals
This most false and evil worldly wisdom?
Blighting as a frost on budded aloes,
How it blackens love, the golden blossom!
Would that I could cherish him this instant,
And dissolve that aching wintry passion
In the warmth of this impatient bosom!
By what cruel fate must I be banished

From his lonely bed? In lovely Lesbos
All my heart is, with its passionate longing.
O too piteous is the lot of women:

In the long night I lie awake for hours
Or sleep the sleep of dreamers without rest.
For in my soul there is discouragement,
And cold remorse lays hands upon my heart.
Now thou art gone, the grey world has no joy,
But bleak and bitter is the wind of life,
Cutting this timid traveller to the bone.

Not all the gods can ever give me peace,
Nor their forgiveness make me glad again,
For I have sinned against my own great soul
And cherished far too little thy great love.
Brave was thy spirit, glad and beautiful,
Nor ever faltered nor was faint of heart
In the fair splendid path of thy desire.
Even as I speak there comes a touch of shame,

Like a friend's hand upon my shoulder laid,
To think such moody and unmanly words
Could ever pass the mouth thy mouth has pressed.

Remembrance wakes. I hear the long far call
To fortitude and courage in the night
From my companions of the mighty past,
All the heroic lovers of the world.

Hast thou not had a sudden thought of me,
Unanxious, gay and tender with desire,
O thou beloved more than all mortal things?
For in my heart there was a sudden sense
Just now with presage of returning joy,
As when the wood-flowers waken to the sun
And all their lovely ardours rearise,
Or when the sinking tide from utmost ebb
With one long sob summons his might once more.

Out of this winter will put forth one day
The incommunicable germ of spring,
The magic fervour that makes all things new,
When all the golden season will be glad
With soft south winds and birds and woodland
flowers
And the shrill marshy music of the frogs,
Piping a chorus to their father Pan.
Then thou and I shall walk the earth once more
Delirious with each other as of old,
And the soft madness lead us far away
By meadowy roads and through the lilac hills
To our own province in the lands of love,—
My new-found Gorgo, heart-throb of the spring.

Heart of me! Ah, Cyprian deal gently!
Soon, Oh soon, restore me to my lover,
That I may repair this outworn habit,
And reclothe him with thy golden glory,
Scarlet circumstance and purple splendour,—

State and air and pride of the immortals,
Which these mortal men, by our devising
And thy favour, wear — with fleeting rapture!
Fiercer blow, thou fervour of the desert!
Northward, northward, you hot winds of Nilus,
More consuming than a smelter's furnace!
You who do the will of alien Isis,
To this heart you cannot be unfriendly,
If I once may loose the sail for Lesbos,
And along the green and foaming sea-track
Scud before you, light as any swallow
Flashing down the long blue slope of springtime.
O ye home-gods, free me to my lover!

THE PLAYERS.

We are the players of a play
As old as earth,
Between the wings of night and day,
With tears and mirth.

There is no record of the land
From whence it came,
No legend of the playwright's hand,
No bruited fame

Of those who for the piece were cast
On that first night,
When God drew up His curtain vast
And there was light.

Before our eyes as we come on,
From age to age,
Flare up the footlights of the dawn
On this round stage.

In front, unknown, beyond the glare
Vague shadows loom;
And sounds like muttering winds are there
Foreboding doom.

Yet wistfully we keep the boards;
And as we mend
The blundering forgotten words,
Hope to the end

To hear the storm-beat of applause
Fill our desire
When the dark Prompter gives us pause,
And we retire.

THE MANSION.

I thought it chill and lonesome,
And too far from the road
For an ideal dwelling,
When here I first abode.

But yesterday a lodger
Smiled as she passed my door,
With mien of gay contentment
That lured me to explore.

Unerringly she leads me,
Compassionate and wise,
Soul of immortal beauty
Wearing the mortal guise.

She knows from sill to attic
The great house through and through,
Its treasures of the ages,
Surprises ever new.

From room to room I follow,
Entranced with each in turn,
Enchanted by each wonder
She bids my look discern.

She names them: here is First-love,
A chamber by the sea;
Here in a flood of noonday
Is spacious Charity.

Here is a cell, Devotion;
And lonely Courage here,
Where child-deserted windows
Look on the Northern year;

Friendship and Faith and Gladness,
Fragrant of air and bloom,
Where one might spend a lifetime
Secure from fear of gloom.

And often as we wander,
I fancy we have neared
The Master of the Mansion,
Who has not yet appeared.

WHO IS THE OWNER?

Who owns this house, my lord or I?
He in whose name the title runs,
Or I, who keep it swept and clean
And open to the winds and suns?

He who is absent year by year,
On some far pleasure of his own,
Or I who spend on it so much
Of willing flesh and aching bone?

What if it prove a fable, all
This rumour of a legal lord,
And we should find ourselves in truth
Owners and masters of the board!

WHO IS THE OWNER?

What if this earth should just belong
To those who tend it, you and me!
What if for once we should refuse
His rental to this absentee?

O friends, no landlord in the world
Could love the place as well as I!
Love is the owner of the house,
The only lord of destiny.

THE FAIRY FLOWER.

There's a fairy flower that grows
In a corner of my heart,
And the fragrance that it spills
Is the sorcery of art.

I may give it little care,
Neither water it nor prune,
Yet it suddenly will blow
Glorious beneath the moon.

I may tend it night and day,
Taking thought to make it bloom;
Yet my efforts all will fail
To avert the touch of doom.

When it dies, my little flower,
You may take my life as well;
Though I live a hundred years,
I shall have no more to tell.

YVANHOÉ FERRARA.

Teach me, of little worth, O Fame,
The golden word that shall proclaim
Yvanhoé Ferrara's name.

I would that I might rest me now,
As once I rested long ago,

In the dim purple summer night,
On scented linen cool and white,

Lulled by the murmur of the sea
And thy soft breath, Yvanhoé.

What cared we for the world or time,
Though like a far-off fitful chime,

We heard the mournful anchored bell
Above the sunken reef foretell

That time should pass and pleasure be
No more for us, Yvanhoé!

We saw the crimson sun go down
Across the harbour and the town,

Dyeing the roofs and spars with gold;
But all his magic, ages old,

Was not so wonderful to me
As thy gold hair, Yvanhoé.

Between the window and the road
The tall red poppies burned and glowed;

They moved and flickered like a flame,
As the low sea-wind went and came;

But redder and more warm than they,
Was thy red mouth, Yvanhoé.

I think the stars above the hill
Upon the brink of time stood still;

And the great breath of life that blows
The coal-bright sun, the flame-bright rose,

Entered the room and kindled thee
As in a forge, Yvanhoé —

Prospered the ruddy fire, and fanned
Thy beauty to a rosy brand,

Till all the odorous purple dark
Reeled, and thy soul became a spark

In the great draught of Destiny
Which men call love, Yvanhoé.

The untold ardour of the earth
That knows no sorrow, fear nor dearth,

Before the pent-up moment passed,
Was glad of all its will at last —

And more, if such a thing could be —
In thy long kiss, Yvanhoé.

For years my life was bright and glad,
Because of the great joy we had;

Until I heard the wind repeat
Thy name behind me in the street,

Like a lost lyric of the sea,
"Yvanhoé, Yvanhoé."

But now the day has no desire;
The scarlet poppies have no fire;

There is no magic in the sun
Nor anything he shines upon;

Only the muttering of the sea,
Since thou art dead, Yvanhoé.

Now God on high, be mine the blame,
If time destroy or men defame
Yvanhoé Ferrara's name.

THE LOVE-CHANT OF KING HACKO

In the time of red October,
In the hills of the pointed fir,
In the days of the slanted sunlight
That ripens cone and burr,
God gave me a splendid woman —
A mate for a lord of lands —
And put the madness on me,
And left her there in my hands.

In the roving woodland season,
When the afternoons are still
And the sound of lowing cattle
Comes up to the purple hill,

God would speak to His creatures,
Flower and beast and bird,
And lays the silence upon them
To hearken to His word.

In the time of the scarlet maple,
When the blue Indian haze
Walks through the wooded valley
And sleeps by the mountain ways,
She stood like a beech in the forest,
Where the wash of sunlight lies,
With her wonderful beech-red hair
And her wondering beech-grey eyes.

In the time of the apple harvest,
When the fruit is gold on the bough,
She stood in the moted sunshine,
The orchards remember how —
Loving, untrammelled and generous,
Ardent and supple and tall,

Quick to the breath of the spirit
As a shadow that moves on a wall.

In a yellow and crimson valley,
At the time of the turning leaf,
When warm are the tawny fern-beds,
And the cricket's life is brief,
I saw the dark blood mantle
And prosper under the tan,
Then I knew the power God lent me
To use, when He made me man.

The world, all being and beauty
From meadow to mountain-line,
Awaiting the touch of rapture
For a meaning and a sign;
A woman's voice said, " Hacko,"
Then I knew and could understand
How love is a greater province
Than dominion of sea or land.

In the month of golden hillsides,
When moons are frosty white,
And the returning Hunter
Looms on the marge of night,
Relieving his brother Arcturus,
Belted, majestic and slow,
To patrol the Arctic watch-fires
And sentry the lands of snow,

A core of fire was kindled
On a hearthstone wide and deep,
Where the great arms of the mountains
Put Folly-of-mind to sleep;
We came without guide or knowledge,
Silver, array or store,
Through the land of purple twilight
To the lodge of the Open Door.

THE CREATION OF LILITH.

This happened in the Garden
Ages on ages since,
When noontide made a pleasant shade
Of ilex, pear and quince.

The Gardener sat and pondered
Some beauty rarer still
Than any he had wrought of earth
And fashioned to his will.

"Now who will be her body?"
"I," said the splendid rose,
"Colour, fire and fragrance,
In imperial repose."

"Who will be her two eyes?"
"I," said the flag of blue,
"Sky and sea all shadowy
Drench me wholly through."

"Who will be her bright mouth?"
"I," the carnation said,
"With my old Eastern ardour
And my Persian red."

"Who will be, among you,
The glory of her hair?"
His glance went reaching through the noon;
The marigold was there.

"Who will be her laughter,
Her love-word and her sigh?"
Among the whispering tree-tops
A breath of wind said, "I."

"And whence will come her spirit?"
Answer there was none.
The Gardener breathed upon her mouth,
And lo, there had been done

The miracle of beauty
Outmarvelling the flowers;
While the great blue dial
Recorded the slow hours.

IN A FAR COUNTRY.

In a land that is little traversed,
Beyond the news of the town,
There lies a delectable Kingdom
Where the crimson sun goes down,

The province of fruitlands and flowers
And colour and sea-sounds and love.
If you were queen of that country,
And I were the king thereof,

We should tread upon scarlet poppies,
And be glad the long day through,
Where the bluest skies in the world
Rest upon hills of blue.

We should wander the slopes of the mountains
With the wind and the nomad bee,
And watch the white sails on the sea-rim
Come up from the curving sea.

We should watch from the sides of the valleys
The caravans of the rain,
In trappings of purple and silver,
Go by on the far-off plain.

And they all should be freighted with treasure,
The vision that gladdens the eye,
The beauty that betters the spirit
To sustain it by and by.

We should hear the larks' fine field-notes
Breaking in bubbly swells,
As if from their rocking steeples
The lilies were ringing their bells;

We should hear invisible fingers
Play on the strings of the pines
The broken measure whose motive
Only a lover divines;

The music of Earth, the enchantress,
The cadence that dwells in the heart
Against the time of oblivion,
To bid it remember and start.

And nothing should make us unhappy,
And no one should make us afraid,
For we should be royal lovers
In the land where this plot is laid.

And with night on the almond orchards
We should lie where warm winds creep,
Under the starry tent-cloth
Hearing the footfall of Sleep.

SONG OF THE FOUR WORLDS.

I.

Is it northward, little friend?
And she whispered, "What is there?"

There are people who are loyal to the glory of their past,
Who held by heart's tradition, and will hold it to the last;
Who would not sell in shame
The honour of their name,
Though the world were in the balance and a sword thereon were cast.

Oh, there the ice is breaking, the brooks are
running free,
A robin calls at twilight from a tall spruce-tree,
And the light canoes go down
Past portage, camp and town,
By the rivers that make murmur in the lands
along the sea.

And she said, " It is not there,
Though I love you, love you dear;
I cannot bind my little heart with loves of yes-
ter year."

II.

Is it southward, little friend?
" Lover, what is there? "

There are men of many nations who were sick
of strife and gain,

And only ask forgetfulness of all the old world's pain.
There Life sets down her measure
For Time to fill at leisure
With loveliness and plenty in the islands of the main.

Oh, there the palms are rustling, the oranges are bright;
In all the little harbour towns the coral streets are white;
The scarlet flowers fall
By the creamy convent wall,
And the Southern Cross gets up from sea to steer the purple night.

And she said, "It is not there,
Though I love you, love you dear;
I should weary of the beauty that is changeless all the year."

III.

Is it eastward, little friend?
And she whispered, "What is there?"

There are rivers good for healing, there are temples in the hills,
There men forsake desire and put by their earthly wills;
And there the old earth breeds
Her mystic mighty creeds
For the lifting of all burdens and the loosing of all ills.

Oh, the tents are in the valley where the shadows sleep at noon,
Where the pack-train halts at twilight and the spicy bales are strewn,
Where the long brown road goes by
To the cut against the sky,
And is lost within the circle of the silent, rosy moon.

And she said, " It is not there,
Though I love you, love you dear;
For my faith is warm and living, not unearthly,
old and sere."

IV.

Is it westward, little friend?
" Lover, what is there? "

There are men and women who are sovereigns
of their fate,
Who look Despair between the eyes and know
that they are great;
Who will not halt nor quail
On the eager endless trail,
Till Destiny makes way for them and Love unbars the gate.

Oh, there the purple lilies are blowing in the sun,
And the meadow larks are singing — a thousand,
if there's one!

And the long blue hills arise
To the wondrous dreamy skies,
For the twisted azure columns of the rain to rest upon.

And she said, "It is not there,
For I love you, love you dear.
Oh, shut the door on Sorrow, for the Four Great Worlds are here!"

STREET SONG AT NIGHT.

There's many a quiet seaport that waits the
daring sail;
There's many a lonely farer by many a doubtful
trail.
And what should be their star
To lead them safe and far, —
What guide to take them o'er the crest, what
pilot past the bar, —
Save Love, the great adventurer who will not
turn nor quail?

As a voyager might remember how the face of
earth was changed, —
All the dreary grey of winter forgotten and
estranged, —

When he rode the tempest through
And steered into the blue
Of a tranquil tropic morning diaphanous and new,
With palms upon the sea-rim where the flying-fishes ranged;

As a lover in old story on a night of wind and rain
Might have stood beneath a window, till a lamp should light the pane
And a lady lean one arm
On the glowing square and warm, —
A girlish golden figure in a frame of dark and storm, —
To look the longest moment ere he turned to life again,

Then set a stubborn shoulder to wind and sleet and snow,

With the weather foul above him and the pavement foul below;
So it happened in my case;
When I saw her, every trace
Of doubt and fear and languor to the pulse of joy gave place,
And the world was great and goodly as he planned it long ago.

There's a shipman who goes sailing where the sea is round and high;
There's a lover who goes piping where winds of morning cry;
And the lilt beneath his heart
Was timed to stop and start,
Till no more ships go sailing and the green hills fall apart.
O, friends, that minstrel-lover, that mariner am I.

THE LEAST OF LOVE.

Only let one fair frail woman
Mourn for me when I am dead, —
World, withhold your best of praises!
There are better things instead.

Shall the little fame concern me,
Or the triumph of the years,
When I keep the mighty silence,
Through the falling of her tears?

I shall heed not, though 'twere April
And my field-larks all returned,
When her lips upon these eyelids
One last poppied kiss have burned.

Painted hills shall not allure me,
Mirrored in the painted stream;
Having loved them, I shall leave them,
Busy with the vaster dream.

Only let one dear dark woman
Mourn for me when I am dead,
I shall be content with beauty
And the dust above my head.

Yet when I shall make the journey
From these earthly dear abodes,
I have four things to remember
At the Crossing of the Roads.

How her hand was like a tea-rose;
And her low voice like the South;
Her soft eyes were tarns of sable;
A red poppy was her mouth.

Only let one sweet frail woman
Mourn for me when I am dead, —
Gently for her gentlest lover, —
More than all will have been said.

Be my requiem the rain-wind;
And my immortality
But the lifetime of one heartache
By the unremembering sea!

A MAN'S LAST WORD.

Death said to me,
"Three things I ask of thee;
And thy reply
Shall make thee or undo thee presently."

I said, "Say on,
Lord Death, thy will be done.
One answers now,
To bribe and fear indifferent as thou."

He said, "Behold,
My power is from of old.
The drunken sea
Is but a henchman and a serf to me.

"Hunger and war
My tireless sleuth-hounds are.
Before my nod
The quailing nations have no help but God.

"What hast thou found,
In one life's little round,
Stronger than these?"
I said, "One little hand-touch of Marie's."

He said, "Again:
Of all brave sights to men —
The glittering rain,
A towering city in an autumn plain,

"An eagle's flight,
A beacon-fire at night,
The harvest moon,
The burnish of a marching host at noon —

"What hast thou seen
In one life's small demesne,
Fairer than these?"
I said, "That supple body of Marie's."

He said, "Once more:
Of all men labour for,
Battle and yearn,
And spend their blessed days without return —

"Leisure or wealth,
Or power or sun-tanned health,
A bruited name,
Or the sad solace of a little fame —

"What hast thou known,
In one life's narrow zone,
Dearer than these?"
I said, "One little love-kiss of Marie's."

And then Death said,
"To-day among the dead
Thou shalt go down,
And with the wise receive thy just renown."

A MIDWINTER MEMORY.

Now the snow is on the roof,
Now the wind is in the flue,
Beauty, keep no more aloof,
Make my winter dreaming true,
Give my fancy proof.

How the year runs back to June,
To the day I saw you first!
In the sultry afternoon
There the mountains lay immersed
In a summer swoon.

In the orchard with your book,
I can see you now as then —

That serene and smiling look,
Far away and back again,
While my spirit shook.

Now the frost is on the pane,
And the winter on the sea,
Gold across the iron strain,
Thought of you comes back to me,
Like a lost refrain.

What a voice it was I heard!
All your j's were soft as d's,
Like the nest-notes of a bird,
And your fingers clasped your knees,
As you smiled each word.

Well I knew you for the one
Sought so long and never found,
In this country of the sun,

All these burning summers round.
There, the search was done!

Now the dark is at the door;
Now the snow is on the sill;
And for all I may deplore,
Time must have his ancient will —
Mar one lover more.

AN ANGEL IN PLASTER.

Dear smiling little snub-nosed baby face
With angel wings,
Be thou the guardian of this house, and grace
Its sublunary things.

Look laughing down, O blessed babe, and lend
That guileless charm,
That beaming joy, to sweeten and defend
Our dwelling from all harm.

Bid sorrow shun the threshold of this door,
And memory
Cease in this place forever to deplore
What has been — and must be.

Come sun or storm, come merriment or tears,
No care can fret
Thy radiant spirit, nor the heavy years
Invade it with regret.

Surely thou art a traveller from a land
That knows no grief!
The life of men thou canst not understand —
So turbulent, so brief.

Yet thou must tarry here, thou darling one,
To smile and bring
Thoughts of the world's fair youth, a fadeless sun
And a perpetual spring.

THE END.